

Another blow for 'Don't Ask, Don't Tell'?
Army court strikes down last remaining
sodomy laws – could impact antigay policy.
page 15

King of Clubs
San Francisco's Gus Bean
keeps the parties rolling.
page 12



Bad behavior
Gael Garcia Bernal
in 'Bad Education.'
see Arts section



BAY AREA REPORTER

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HRC refutes reports of retreat

by Zak Szymanski

In the week following a front page *New York Times* story about the Human Rights Campaign's plans to become even more moderate and back away from issues like gay marriage, HRC spokespeople have refuted the story, claiming that the national LGBT organization never advocated a retreat from the fight for equality.



Hilary Rosen

But not all LGBT activists are buying it. And even some who concede that the media makes mistakes believe that an error on such a grand scale highlights the problems with HRC's leadership style.

The December 9 article, "Groups Debate Slower Strategy on Gay Rights," noted HRC's recent leadership changes in the wake of the national presidential election, with Cheryl Jacques stepping down as HRC president, and HRC co-chairs Michael Berman and Hilary Rosen

page 10 ►

Canada high court OKs same-sex marriage

by Kevin Davis

Canada's Supreme Court ruled December 9 that the country's constitution allows broadening its definition of marriage to permit same-sex unions. The decision allows the government to ask Parliament to legalize such unions nationwide.

If Parliament approves the action, as is likely, Canada would become, after the Netherlands and Belgium, the third country to legalize same-sex marriage.

Such marriages are currently legal in Ontario, British Columbia, Quebec, the Yukon, Manitoba, Nova Scotia, and Saskatchewan.

Prime Minister Paul Martin said that since six Canadian provinces and a territory already allow gay marriage, accounting for 85 percent of the population, he favored nation-



Kevin Bourassa, left, and Joe Varnell, Canada's first legally married same-sex couple, are happy with last week's court decision.

al legalization and that his Cabinet ministers should, also. Parliament will introduce a bill upon returning to session on January 31.

To pass, the bill needs the approval of almost half the Liberal Party Parliament members to obtain a 155-vote majority in the 308-

seat House. The bill currently has the support of the 38-member Liberal Party Cabinet and virtually all the Quebecois (Quebec national party), and 19 New Democrat (socialist) lawmakers. Only the Conservative Party opposes it.

In its nonbinding opinion, the Supreme Court said that the legal definition of marriage should change with public opinion over time.

"Several centuries ago, it would have been understood that marriage be available only to opposite-sex couples," the court said. "The recognition of same-sex marriage in several Canadian jurisdictions as well as two European

countries belies the assertion that the same is true today."

Evan Wolfson, executive director of the U.S. group Freedom to Marry, said that the court decision is the final step in justifying

page 16 ►

Lesbian minister defrocked: A talk with Beth Stroud

by Jason Victor Serinus

On December 2, 18 months after the Reverend Beth Stroud, an associate pastor of Philadelphia's First United Methodist Church of Germantown, announced that she was a lesbian, a Methodist

court of 13 clergy voted 7-6 to withdraw her ministerial credentials. Stroud was charged with violating Paragraph 2702.1(b) of the 2000 Book of Discipline by living as "a self-avowed practicing homosexual in a monogamous, committed relationship ... while in the ordained ministry."

Though Stroud, 34, can no longer wear the insignia of ordained ministry, perform weddings, consecrate communion, or baptize, she continues as associate pastor of the Northwest Philadelphia church whose long history of justice work frequently leads its congregants to take to the streets.

Charges against Stroud were based on four bodies of evidence. These included an April 27, 2003 sermon in which she credited Chris Paige, with whom she has now lived for four years, as embodying "grace and love and discipleship for me."

"Because of my relationship with her," said Stroud in her sermon, "I am a better, more faithful Christian. I am deeply grateful to her for the daily practice in loving and being loved and forgiving and being forgiven that constantly deepens who I am as a person of faith."

Retired Bishop Joseph Yeakel, who presided over the two-day trial, refused to allow Stroud's defense to cite a March 2004



The Reverend Beth Stroud

Methodist decision that found openly lesbian minister the Reverend Karen Dammann of Seattle not guilty of engaging in "practices incompatible with Christian teachings." Nor did he grant Stroud the opportunity to challenge the rulebook on the grounds that it violates the Christian principles of the Bible and the Constitution of the United Methodist Church. She was instead given 30 days to appeal.

Several days after the verdict, Stroud granted her first post-trial interview to the LGBT press. The telephone conversation was held December 7.

Asked if she has since decided to appeal, Stroud admits that she is torn.

"This congregation decided roughly 15 years ago to become a reconciling congregation that's fully inclusive of gay and lesbian people in all aspects of its life and ministry," she explained.

"When we made that decision, the church went through a very long process where it was important that everyone be heard and everyone have a chance to speak. As a result, some of my strongest supporters in the congregation are people who then had a different perspective on homosexuality than they have now. I would like my brothers and sisters throughout the UMC to have the same opportunity for conversion and transformation

page 16 ►



Jane Philomeni/Clairad

Love those rainbow flags

Clyde Wildes, founder of Raising Colors, grabs a rainbow flag as friend and supporter Dan Healy looks on. Wildes was at a benefit for his organization Saturday, December 11 hosted by Carl Hack and Jeff Mauk. Raising Colors is the group that puts up the 320 rainbow flags along Market Street every June. "It was a great party," said Wildes, who added that next year marks the 22nd year the flags will have flown. Hack said that about \$18,000 was raised at the benefit, which was more than expected. People can sponsor flags in memory of a loved one or in honor of someone special. For more information, visit www.raisingcolors.com.

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Library, GLHS merger draws mixed reaction

by Matthew S. Bajko

Supporters and detractors of a proposal to move the GLBT Historical Society and Museum's archives to the Castro's branch library packed the first public meeting about the project last Saturday, December 11.

Roughly 50 people attended the late morning meeting at the Eureka Valley Harvey Milk Memorial Branch Library to weigh in on whether a planned renovation of the 1960s building should be expanded to include building an addition or second floor to house the historical society's collection.

"It's a great project but not here," said Marshall Feldman, a Noe Valley resident who argued that the modernist building should be preserved and not knocked down. "To lose another modernist building for another bland Victorian building is a shame. Maybe it would be better at the City Athletic Club building."

The athletic club site above the Castro Muni station on 17th Street is currently vacant and for lease. Another site suggested as a better fit for the historical society was the vacant parcel at Market and 16th streets. Long planned as the home to a Noe Valley church,



Supervisor Bevan Dufty, lower left, listens to comments at the meeting to discuss changes at the Harvey Milk branch of the public library.

the land has remained vacant for years after an arson fire destroyed the church formerly at the site.

Brian Basinger, founder of the AIDS Housing Alliance, said he preferred seeing senior housing built above the branch library.

"We are losing our living people history," said Basinger, who also floated the idea of swapping the church's land for the library's lot. "You could have a more landmark building at that spot" on Market Street.

Lion Barnett, former president of the Eureka Valley Promotion Association, said he favored preserving the current library branch.

"This is a great building. I would hate to see it destroyed."

While no final decisions have been made about the proposal or the look of an expanded library, several people in attendance said it appeared otherwise. The possibility of losing the library's parking spaces also drew criticism from residents and merchants.

"This feels like a coup," decried Edith Wellin, a member of the Council of Neighborhood Libraries. "Once the parking is gone the seniors will be unable to come here."

"It would be the end of the neighborhood's use of this facility," she added. "It certainly would no longer be comfortable to the rest of the community."

Others spoke in favor of the project, saying the city and gay community have a responsibility not only to preserve queer history but to educate younger generations about those who came before them.

"We've always supported maintaining the gay identity of

this neighborhood. We would like to see the development of gay institutions. I think we could really support something like this," said Joe Curtin, with Castro Area Planning and Action. Though he added, "This is a sweet little building. It has open space I hope can be maintained in some sense."

Neil Shorstein said if the two groups are willing to work together then he sees no reason to oppose the project.

"It sounds pretty good to me. It seems to make sense and would be a win-win for the community," he said.

Library officials are already meeting and discussing plans for a \$4.3 million renovation of the library on 16th Street between Pond and Prosper due to passage of the city's Branch Library Renovation Bond. The current structure is a 5,600 square foot, one-story facility that is not seismically safe and out of code under the Americans with Disabilities Act. Current plans call for adding a 500 to 1,000 square foot addition on the library's back patio.

Paul Underwood, acting city librarian, said if the building were instead demolished, then a program room for the community could be added, as well as more space to house the library's Hormel Center collection of LGBT material.

With the historical society's archives as well, Underwood said the branch would have a "research focus but still be a general use library."

Ruth Mahaney, co-chair of the historical society's board, said the

page 19 ►

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Supes secure funding for AIDS programs

by Matthew S. Bajko

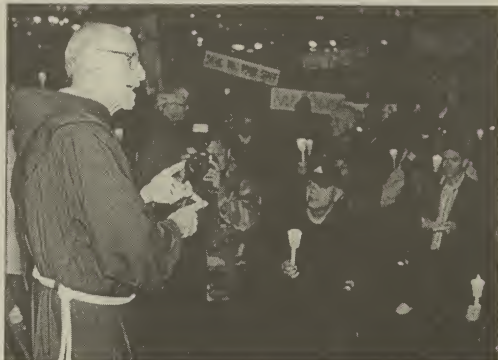
Like magicians pulling rabbits out of their hats, San Francisco's Board of Supervisors miraculously found \$6 million in savings in the city's budget to head off devastating healthcare cuts, especially for people living with AIDS.

At their meeting Tuesday, December 14, the supervisors passed the money saving plan by raising restaurant inspection fees, ending free bottled water service for city employees, capping overtime for administrative city employees, moving more indigent and low-income residents from city aid to federal programs, and cutting public funding for the San Francisco Convention & Visitors Bureau by 5 percent, or less than \$600,000, over the next one and a half years.

It remains to be seen how the money will be allocated to those AIDS agencies that had been expecting cuts. But the news was welcome relief for nonprofit leaders who have battled funding cuts since spring.

"I don't know if it is full restoration or partial restoration. It is good news all around though," said Brett Andrews, executive director of Positive Resource Center.

The agency was facing a \$77,000 cut, which would have



Father Louis Vitale speaks against deep budget cuts at a candlelight vigil December 8 outside City Hall.

meant the loss of two staff people. As of Wednesday morning, Andrews said he had yet to hear if the full amount would be restored.

"We are now able to, if restored, hold on and maintain our capacity to provide support services to people with AIDS," he said.

One proposal to cut city funding to the opera, ballet, and symphony was shelved after Mayor Gavin Newsom said he would veto such a cut. And the supervisors pared back proposed cuts to the visitors bureau.

The Board of Supervisors Budget Committee voted last Thurs-

day 2-1 to send to the full board the proposal by Supervisor Gerardo Sandoval to cut \$3.66 million or half of the annual hotel tax allocation to the visitors bureau. Sandoval said he made the proposal because the city's business community, which opposed two tax measures that failed last month, had to do its share to plug the city's \$97 million deficit.

"I was hopeful we would get the attention of the business community and what is their fair share," Sandoval said during the committee hearing last week. "They think they are going to win

page 11 ►



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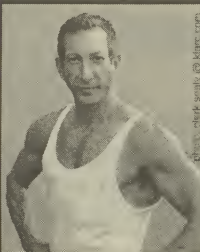
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News in brief

by Cynthia Laird

Gay men's forum tonight

The San Francisco Gay Men's Community Initiative will host its December community forum tonight (Thursday, December 16) from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. at Metropolitan Community Church-San Francisco, 150 Eureka Street. Participants are invited to join in a dialogue with a panel of professionals and other gay men to discuss "Holiday Blues," and the way in which the demands and pressures of the holiday season can be overwhelming for many. Questions that will be discussed include "Do the holidays bring expectations of togetherness and social connection that cannot be met by 'gay' families?" and "Do you feel obligated to be festive and social when you either don't want to or can't?" Following the discussion, there will be a holiday celebration. The event is free. For more information, e-mail sfgmci@yahoo.com.

Castro Theatre protest

An ad hoc group is organizing a protest at the Castro Theatre Saturday, December 18 from 3 to 5 p.m. in response to owner Ted Nasser's recent firing of programmer Anita Monga. Audiences in Action, a group of film lovers committed to saving the Castro, questions Nasser's commitment to showing gay-themed films at the theater.

In a telephone interview with the Bay Area Reporter last month, Nasser refuted any claims that he or his wife have raised concerns

about the gay content of the movies shown at the theater or the images used in the promotional materials for the films.

But Audiences in Action said its demonstration would protest Monga's firing and demand that theater owners bring her back. "Their misguided decision has a negative impact not only on their business, but also on San Francisco's reputation as a city that fosters cultural excellence," organizers said in a statement.

For more information, e-mail rehiraanita@yahoo.com.

Dog rescue benefit

Wonder Dog rescue, a San Francisco dog and cat rescue organization, is holding a holiday party and fundraiser at El Rio Saturday, December 18 from 6 to 9 p.m. The event will help raise funds to support the medical care of Wonder Dog's rescued animals as well as homeless cats and dogs in Thailand. Vegetarian fare will be provided by Café Abo and there will be a no-host bar and holiday music. A sliding scale \$10-\$15 donation is requested. El Rio is located at 3158 Mission Street. For more information, e-mail Linda@wonderdogrescue.org or call (415) 756-1306.

Hepatitis C workshop

The Quan Yin Healing Center will present a free workshop on hepatitis C care Saturday, December 18. The morning event will be on focusing Qigong to manage the hepatitis C virus and will be presented by Laura Bresler. The center is located at 455 Valencia Street in San Francisco. As with previous workshops, Saturday's session begins with a light breakfast at 9:30 a.m. and ends with a mini-Qigong class at noon.

For more information, call or e-mail Carla Wilson at (415) 861-4964 or qyhac@aol.com.

GMC holiday concerts

The San Francisco Gay Men's Chorus is gearing up for several of its "Home for the Holidays" concerts, starting with one tonight (Thursday, December 16) at 7 p.m. at the Castro Theatre, 429 Castro Street in San Francisco. Tonight's performance includes the chorus' Lollipop Guild and Vocal Minority, as well as the bell choir from Bethany United Methodist Church. Tickets are \$20 per person.

On Sunday, December 19, the chorus will perform in Santa Cruz at the First Congregational Church, 900 High Street. Tickets are \$20 general admission; \$35 preferred and the show benefits Full Spectrum and the Santa Cruz AIDS Project. For tickets, call (831) 420-5260.

On Christmas Eve, the chorus returns to the Castro Theatre for three shows — at 5, 7, and 9 p.m. General admission is \$15 or \$20 after December 23. This marks the 15th year the chorus has performed its holiday show and includes the Lesbian/Gay Chorus of San Francisco at the 9 p.m. event.

Tickets for the San Francisco shows are available at www.sfgmci.org or call (415) 865-3650.

Coat drive for queer youth

Assemblyman Mark Leno's (D-San Francisco) office, the LGBT Community Center's Youth Space, and the Lavender Youth Recreation and Information Center are teaming up with Out of the Closet thrift store and have announced a winter coat drive for needy LGBT youth. Out of the Closet is supplying warm coats and is also seeking help from the community.

Interested people can donate a jacket or coat that they no longer need (preferably clean and in good condition) at any Out of the Closet location between now and the end of the month. Out of the Closet has stores located at 100 Church Street (at Duboce); 1498 Polk Street (at California) and 2415 Mission Street in San Francisco and at 1600 University Avenue in Berkeley. The store benefits the Magic Johnson HIV/AIDS clinics. For more information, call the Church Street store at (415) 252-1101. ▼



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COMMUNITY NEWS

Hormel joins board of Commonwealth Club

by Zak Szymanski

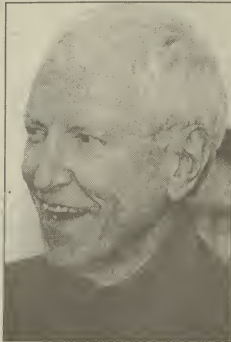
San Francisco's Commonwealth Club – the nation's oldest and largest public affairs forum – has selected prominent LGBT community leader James C. Hormel to serve on its board of directors.

The openly gay philanthropist, businessman, and former ambassador to Luxembourg begins his introductory one-year term in January. Most board members then go on to serve additional two-year or three-year terms.

As a longtime member of the Commonwealth Club, Hormel, 71, said the organization "performs a very important community service in bringing diverse points of view in the form of lectures, lunches speakers, and programs of various types here to the city. I'm pleased I was invited to join."

The Commonwealth Club has about 16,000 members and an annual budget of about \$3.2 million. It produces over 400 annual events on topics ranging across politics, culture, society, and the economy. Membership is open to anyone and ranges from \$45 for students to \$155 for families.

Widely sought for the boards of several other organizations, Hormel comes from a variety of different backgrounds and experience, which is what made him such an appealing choice, according to Commonwealth Club CEO



James C. Hormel

Gloria Duffy.

"Every year we make up a list of desirable board members, and Jim is qualified on so many different levels," said Duffy. "He's a business community leader, a diplomat, a nonprofit philanthropist, and has ties to the gay community. A lot of other organizations have asked him to serve on their boards, and we're just thrilled he said yes to us."

As one of 47 board members, Hormel's duties will include setting policy for the organization, planning the general focus of programming, problem solving, community outreach, networking, fundraising, and being a public representative of what the organization stands for.

Neither Hormel nor the Com-

monwealth Club are comfortable declaring him to be the first openly gay board member – "We've had other board members who may be openly gay, but it hasn't come up during board business," said Duffy – but all are in agreement that he is the first board member with a public focus on gay and lesbian issues.

Hormel believes his sexual orientation may be an asset in the sense that it brings the Commonwealth Club "avenues to a constituency that they haven't necessarily had before," but other than that he believes it is a non-issue.

"That seems to be something that is fading into our past as more and more boards include openly gay members. I don't presume to be bringing something entirely new to the board in that regard, which I think is encouraging," he said. "But that doesn't mean we don't have to bring our issues to the forefront with some regularity."

The Commonwealth Club has expanded its LGBT programming in recent years, coinciding with the arrival of Duffy, who came to the organization directly from the Pentagon in 1996. Club programs have included discussions on "Don't Ask, Don't Tell"; gay parenting; and gay marriage, even before Mayor Gavin Newsom began issuing same-sex marriage licenses. Addi-

page 11 ►

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OPEN FORUM

HRC's straight talk

The Human Rights Campaign is in freefall these days. Its former president, Cheryl Jacques, was dumped unceremoniously by the board a couple of weeks ago and recent news reports have stated that one of the reasons for her forced resignation (or firing, depending on your view) was that Jacques wanted to continue HRC's push for marriage equality. That apparently was at odds with the board, which is shell-shocked by the November election that resulted in antigay marriage bans in 11 states, not to mention the re-election of President Bush. Board members and HRC spokespeople have denied vehemently that Jacques's resignation was due to the election results, and they have denied news reports that suggest HRC wants to take a more moderate approach.

But the HRC board's decision to put moderates in charge of the organization while it searches for a permanent replacement only bolsters arguments made by its critics: namely, that HRC is shying away from the same-sex marriage debate.

The board also is facing serious questions about its decision to name a straight man — Democratic lobbyist Michael Berman — as interim director, along with out lesbian Hilary Rosen, another high-powered lobbyist who is the partner of former HRC head Elizabeth Birch. Curiously, HRC omitted from its initial news release the information that Berman is heterosexual and only later provided that fact, which was spun by fellow board members as some sort of bold decision.

We strongly disagree.

It is certainly true that the LGBT community needs powerful straight allies, and we're the first to admit that we won't get full equality without help and votes from straight politicians and other leaders. And we appreciate Berman's tenure on HRC's board. But leading a gay rights organization is different. In that capacity, Berman is in charge of developing HRC's future path; but he's not part of the constituency that HRC purports to serve — the LGBT community.

One of our complaints when HRC hired Jacques last year was her relative inexperience being out of the closet — in that light, the selection of Berman to lead HRC, however temporary, is even worse — he's not

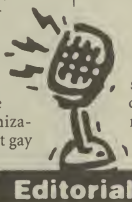
even gay. Berman in a leadership role of the organization is different from serving as a board member. How can he truly speak for lesbians and gays when he is not a member of that community? No matter how empathetic Berman is to LGBT issues — and we have no doubt that he is — he simply lacks the intimate, personal understanding of our issues that can only come from the experience of being gay. We have spent decades being marginalized and pushed to the sidelines by the straight leaders of national organizations, and now the country's largest gay rights group cannot find a qualified, experienced gay man to help lead it? It's offensive.

HRC was founded for a reason: gays and lesbians needed a strong voice to lobby at the national level. But the organization has always fought the perception that it's mainly made up of well-to-do white gays, and only this year finally embraced inclusion of transgenders in its signature legislative work, the Employment Non-Discrimination Act. HRC did take an active and im-

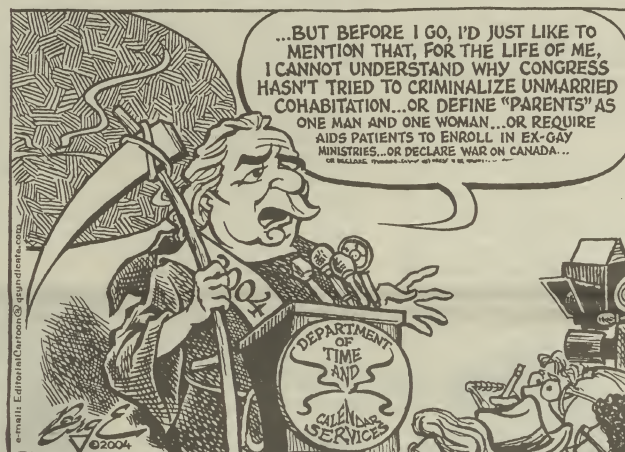
portant role in fighting the Federal Marriage Amendment in Congress this year, but the slew of state amendments banning same-sex marriage now has sent the organization into a tailsip, with at least some board members apparently feeling queasy about pushing ahead.

We cannot sit back and wait for conservative elements of this country to amend us out of existence. Already, since the election, there has been a steady drip, drip, drip of disturbing developments: the push for abstinence-only sex education; the proliferation of "intelligent design" curriculum in the schools (which is a new way of saying creationism); television stations being afraid to air various programs because of threats of action from the Federal Communications Commission; the list goes on and on. The religious right, emboldened by Bush's re-election, will stop at nothing when it comes to promote intolerance and the denial of basic rights.

HRC is sending the wrong message these days — the organization needs to fight harder, not retreat into the wilderness. ▼



Editorial



Giving to LGBT groups an investment in our future

by Roger Doughty and John Bare

A few weeks ago, we got an unwelcome reminder that the path to justice isn't as smooth as a yellow brick road. In 11 states, voters amended their constitutions to prohibit us from receiving rights we don't even have yet, and eight of those states voted to remove rights we'd barely begun to enjoy. Hatred and fear won this election as surely as did George Bush and Dick Cheney. Now, after several weeks of cycling through the grief process, many of us are asking what we do now to keep our movement from stalling. The short answer is a lot. And one starting place lies as close as our mailboxes.

While the outlook appears grim, we must remember the remarkable and irreversible progress we've made toward freedom and equality. While running for president in 2000, candidate Bush only reluctantly met with a group of gay and lesbian Republicans, the so-called Austin 12. As president, he now says that states should be allowed to recognize civil unions. Joyously, many of us are and remain legally married in Massachusetts and Canada, while the U.S. Supreme Court has ruled that the private expression of our intimacy lies beyond the scope of government regulation.

We must also remember that the LGBT movement didn't make progress by chance, nor will chance reverse our most recent misfortunes. Progress comes through countless

individual acts of courage and integrity, and through the tireless work of community organizations that advocate for us, defend us, and keep us healthy in mind, body, and spirit. They amplify our voices. They build a strong community. They celebrate and proclaim our lives through the arts.

Yet these organizations struggle daily for support. They ask us to volunteer, to write our governor and legislators, to volunteer in our clinics and galleries, and to walk, run, bike, skate, dance, and eat in support of them. They cannot do their work without our volunteer efforts.

But they need more than volunteerism. All the volunteer efforts in the world won't pay the phone bill. The landlord won't accept an offer to sweep the floors in lieu of rent. Despite bottomless buckets of goodwill, we can't hire the lobbyists, doctors, social workers, curators, counselors, and lawyers we will need. We cannot build the long-term financial strength of our organizations with deposits of time. They need money.

Just after the election, nearly one hundred active and committed donors gathered at the San Francisco LGBT Community Center to strategize how to make their philanthropy more effective in light of current realities. They recognized that our movement requires substantial, long-term finan-

cial investment if we are ever to realize the freedom and equality promised in our Constitution. We are vastly outspent by our opponents, and it will take time and money to shift that imbalance.

Although one hundred donors gathered together, what is needed is one hundred thousand. Not one hundred thousand big-money donors, but one hundred thousand who believe that they have a stake in gaining the equality we all deserve — and give what they can.

This is where our mailboxes come in.

Many of our organizations will use this holiday period to ask for year-end contributions. We can all use that opportunity to be counted among that one hundred thousand. Each gift is an investment in ourselves and our freedom.

Each envelope you send back with a check, large or small, makes our movement more powerful, our voices louder, our community stronger. Each gift makes the path to justice a little bit smoother. ▼

Roger Doughty is executive director of the Horizons Foundation and John Bare is a board member. Horizons Foundation is the Bay Area LGBT community foundation and makes grants to scores of LGBT organizations. For more information, visit www.horizonsfoundation.org.

Guest Opinion

LETTERS

UCC's gay pastor

The United Church of Christ, now embroiled in controversy over queer welcoming ads, which some broadcasters have refused to run, has been a leader since the early 1970s (*"Pastors cry foul over networks' rejection of United Church of Christ ad,"* December 9).

The first openly gay man, Bill Johnson, to be ordained in the church was grand marshal of the first Pride Parade I witnessed in San Francisco. Even back then, the United Church of Christ wasn't afraid to be inclusive and Christian.

John Cailleau
San Francisco

What is goal of marriage naysayers?

Regarding *"Fundies and Leno battle over same-sex marriage issue,"* [December 9]: It may be true what Congressman Barney Frank (D-Massachusetts) said, that America is "not ready" for gay marriage. But let's make no mistake, "not ready for gay marriage" is political correctness for "not ready to stop hating."

Matthew S. Bajko's article was excellent, but what more could be added to the accompanying photo showing two beautiful and loving men kissing each other after a commitment ceremony at City Hall? What could possibly be so wrong with that symbolic gesture of the very things Christians claim to believe in? No degrading or sexually perverse demonstration here. Just love, commitment, and respectful embrace. Yet so offensive was this site that these "fundies" were obliged to blow the photo up, larger than life (though likely not so large as the offense they felt at first gaze), plaster it to the side of a truck and, not unlike the Nazi stormtroopers of 1930s Berlin,



Mailstrom

drive it around town so that others could share in their outrage.

The argument against gay marriage (and let's face it, this terminology was the opposition's from the start), has to date been fought on the terms of the opposition. Why can't we, in our own terms, ask the opponents of gay marriage the most obvious question, "What is the alternative to gay marriage?"

Should gay marriage be defeated once more, do fundamentalists believe that homosexuality also will be defeated? Not even the most hateful among them believes that. What, then, is the alternative?

By opposing gay marriage without suggestions for another way to promote loving and committed relationships, are not the opponents of gay marriage and civil unions, in fact, promoting non-committed, multi-partner and likely unsafe, gay sex?

In the June 2003 issue of the *National Journal on Public Health*, the conclusion of three studies funded to discover why AIDS prevention programs were failing (including one co-sponsored by the University of California, San Francisco and Rand Health of Santa Monica and two by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention), was that American society's homophobia, more than any other single factor, is contributing to the rise in

HIV/AIDS infection rates in this country. The *Journal's* editorial staff concluded that the antigay marriage movement was, essentially, committing the nation to discriminatory laws that are genocidal in nature.

So let us ask every opponent to gay marriage: what, exactly, is the goal of their movement?

Dan Aiello
San Francisco

A Vietnam Christmas

by Robert Wilson Anthony

I served in the Army during the Vietnam conflict. In 1967 I was stationed in Long Binh just outside of a village known as Bien Hoa. I was assigned to the 32nd medical depot. We were a medical supply unit.

As with most troops that were stationed on large installations, we were broken down into areas known as companies. Our housing consisted of hooches; these were wood-framed units surrounded by sand bags and topped with a canvas tent.

Every company employed local Vietnamese. They were known as daily hires. Most of the hires were owned. They worked in the companies as hooch girls. For the most part they were hardworking, endlessly curious, and many were religious.

For \$30 a month, they would wash our clothes by hand, polish our boots, and clean our hooches. What a deal! My hooch was partitioned into four units. I was one of the lucky ones who got my own unit.

We had two hooch girls that worked for the troops stationed in our hooch. My two girls were Nen and Bau (pronounced "bow"). They were about 17 years old. Nen was Catholic and Bau was Buddhist. They were good girls, fascinated by the GIs, and all the wonderful things that we possessed and took for granted.

Christmas time was very important to everyone in Vietnam. It was also near the beginning of the Buddhist holidays known as Tet.

Beginning in November, care packages would start to arrive from home with every type of paraphernalia of items that would try to make our Christmas as close to home as possible.

My sister, Roberta, sent me a care package with all kinds of goodies. The best gift in the box was a Christmas tree. It stood about 15 inches high and was made of fuzzy plastic with electric lights and little plastic ornaments. In the center of the tree was a tube. At the base of the tree was a compartment that held tiny Styrofoam balls. It was battery powered and, when you turned it on, these little balls would shoot out of the top of the tree, and look like snow falling down around the tree. I put it on top of an old footlocker and it would be the focus of my Christmas in Vietnam.

The day after I got my care package, we were returning to the company area for lunch and I noticed a bunch of hooch girls gathered around the doorway to my unit. When I got to the doorway, there was Nen and Bau leading a major discussion about my tree.

Nen, being Catholic, had a working knowledge about Christmas. For Bau, it was the first time she had ever seen a Christmas tree. I picked it up and brought it outside. Everyone looked when I turned the tree on — out came the "snow" from the top of the tree. All the girls "ooh-ed and ah-ed" and in unison said, "Number One," which means that it is very nice.

When Christmas came, as was custom I had purchased some gifts at the PX for Nen and Bau. They were not very expensive because it was a common practice for the Vietnamese to resell items on the

black market in Bien Hoa, their village.

They were very grateful and it was fun sharing my customs with them. When they were leaving, Bau asked me what I was going to do with the tree when Christmas was over. I told her that I was not sure what I was going to do with it. That was the first of many times Bau would hound me for the tree.

At first it was amusing. I would return to the company and there would be Bau pleading, begging, and then threatening me if she did not get the tree. It was getting old. We got into a heated argument and the words flew. I told her in no uncertain language that she would never get the tree because I knew she would try to sell it on the black market. She was furious. In a tirade of Vietnamese, I was called everything in the book. With tears rolling down her cheeks, she wreaked havoc on my hooch. I must have really hit a nerve.

During the next two weeks, while going through New Year's, I noticed a big change in Nen and Bau. They would not look at me, talk to me, and I realized that I was on the s--- list. I started missing socks, my laundry could have been cleaner, and there was tension in the air that you could cut with a knife. Every day it was getting worse.

About a week after New Year's, I cornered Nen and Bau in my hooch. I told them that I was very angry about how things were. I told Bau, if she needed that tree so badly, to take it. I also wished her well getting a good price for it on the black market. I turned the tree on for the last time and gave it to Bau. She was elated.

Bau left the hooch with her prize. Before Nen left, she came up to me and said, "Bau no sell, you see — Bau no sell."

Things went back to normal. I was off the list and my living conditions improved.

January was the beginning of the Lunar New Year for the Vietnamese. It was also a heightened time of the year for enemy offensives throughout Vietnam. Everyone was preparing for the Tet offensive of 1968. Working in a medical supply depot, our job was to supply everyone from medics to major hospitals throughout Vietnam with medical supplies. Our supplies were flown into Vietnam from all over the world. They would end up at Bien Hoa airbase, just outside of Long Binh.

When we were about a mile inside the village, we were forced to slow down because of traffic. Off to my left was a row of shops. In the middle of this stretch of shops was what could be best described as a storefront Buddhist temple. In the large plate glass window of the shop was a large golden Buddha. It was beautiful. Then something caught my eye. Among the gifts that were placed at the base of the statue, and at Buddha's right foot, was my Christmas tree. It was Bau's gift to Buddha — the finest she could give. ▼

City resident Charlie Englert submitted the above essay that was written several years ago by his late partner, Robert Anthony.

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Blunt-force trauma

by Paula Martinac

I'm not employed in a factory, office building, or school; to start work every morning, all I do is mosey upstairs to my home office and turn on the computer—an enviable set-up, considering many people's way-less-than-ideal working conditions. Still, I face a grave occupational hazard, and it's bigger than carpal tunnel syndrome: I am a lesbian journalist at a time when the news from the gay front has been brutally devastating. Indeed, for those of us who work in lesbian and gay media or activism and must read the headlines every day, the onslaught of "toxic news" is one of the perils of our jobs.

Psychotherapists say that the accumulation of negative events has a particularly harmful impact on mental health. For example, if you have one love affair turn sour, it will hurt; but if several relationships tank in a row, that can be injurious to your long-term emotional health.

In a similar way, I've been feeling the snowballing effect of a number of terrible gay-related news reports.

No, not simply terrible, like the passage of 11 antigay amendments in one day; the reports I'm referring to are more *Twilight Zone*-esque. In fact, three recent stories made me feel like I had entered an alternate reality—or maybe was living in a quasi-fascist state. Not coincidentally, all three of the stories have to do with religion.

Story No. 1: "Methodist Jury Convicts Lesbian Minister." Of child abuse? Embezzling church funds? No, Beth Stroud, a United Methodist Church minister, was found "guilty" of living openly in a committed relationship with another woman. Shocking! This decision was handed down by a church whose marketing slogan is, hypocritically, "Open Hearts, Open Minds, and Open Doors."

Story No. 2: "Gay Civil Unions 'Grave Sign of Dehumanization,' Says Vatican Cardinal." By that statement, Cardinal Lopez Trujillo, one of the Roman Catholic Church's highest ranking representatives, didn't mean that civil unions "dehumanize" gay couples because they reduce them to second-class status—something a

civil-rights lawyer might, in fact, argue. He meant that any form of legal recognition of same-sex relationships—even if it isn't called marriage—"dehumanizes" heterosexuals by "inventing new, unacceptable notions of marriage," God's plan for the world. (I'm guessing that Trujillo chose the word "dehumanizing" because he sees our next step as trying to marry our pets.)

Story No. 3 (and this is the clearest "we live in a fascist state" example): "Two Networks Reject Church Ad as Too 'Controversial.'" Because it dishonored Judaism or Islam or some other non-Christian religion? Because it avowed that "God Hates Fags"? No and no again. The advertising message the United Church of Christ wanted

to offer American television viewers, including lesbian and gay couples, was "You're welcome here." CBS had an eerily *Pravda*-like explanation for its decision not to accept the UCC spot: "The Executive Branch has recently proposed a Constitutional Amendment to define marriage as a union between a man and a woman, [so] this spot is unacceptable for broadcast."

These stories hit me with unusual force, because as a queer editor and writer I have tried not to trample on people's religious beliefs, especially those that diverge sharply from my own. Indeed, I have written that I think our community has failed to respect the strong religious ideas many people of faith hold about the "sanctity" of marriage, and that has subsequently hindered our struggle for equality.

Now here come three reports that clearly illustrate the difficulty of addressing people's religious beliefs head-on, given entrenched, institutionalized homophobia. In the first two stories, prominent religious institutions chose to de-



Christine Smith

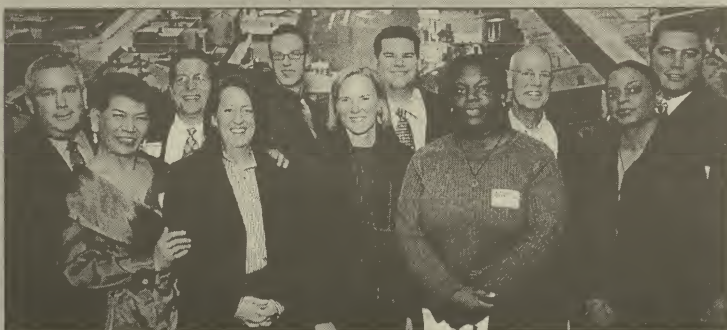
base gay people by equating our relationships with crimes—either against selectively applied church law, or (as in Trujillo's case) against nature itself. If that's not "spiritual violence"—as the Reverend Mel White's Soulforce calls "the misuse of religion to sanction the condemnation and rejection of any of God's children"—I don't know what is.

The third story, though, is the real eye-opener. In that instance, when a religious sect sought to interpret Christ's teachings with the simple, all-embracing message of "You're welcome here," corporate America put a lid on the attempt, deciding that the message was just too contentious. (Read: Our president, who was helped into power by right-wing, antigay fundamentalists, wouldn't like it.) This is a good example of what screenwriting guru Robert McKee calls "the negation of the negation"—when someone sees injustice and tries to right it, only to discover to his or her horror that the powers-that-be are themselves corrupt.

I'm not sure how to deflect the devastating blows that this kind of news delivers, although getting angry is probably a pretty good start. Remember that popular saying, "Don't mourn, organize"? I, for one, will keep climbing to my third-story office and writing, and my readers, hopefully, will find themselves with no choice but to act. ▼

Paula Martinac is a Lambda Literary Award-winning author of eight books and editor in chief of *Q Syndicate*. She can be reached care of this publication or at LesbianNotions@qsyndicate.com.

Early holiday presents



Jane Pittman Cleland

The Wells Fargo Foundation and Pride San Francisco, a Wells Fargo employee group, honored six Bay Area nonprofit organizations for their contributions to the community and presented each agency with a \$2,500 check during a reception Friday, December 10. Above, Tim Hanlon, far left, president of the Wells Fargo Foundation, greeted representatives from the National Center for Lesbian Rights, the Horizons Foundation, the Billy DeFrank LGBT Community Center, the Pacific Center for Human Growth, Spectrum Center for LGBT Concerns, and the Imperial Council of San Francisco.

POLITICS

Democrats look for new leadership

by Wayne Friday

As national Democratic leaders meet in the coming weeks to find a new party leader in hopes of regaining some momentum (and some possible congressional seats) in the 2006 off-year elections, I would have to hope that they aren't taking seriously former Vermont Governor **Howard Dean's** bid to become the next chair of the Democratic National Committee.

Eight potential candidates to head the party met over the weekend in Lake Buena Vista, Florida with Democratic officials, including nearly all state chairs of the Democratic Party. A decision is expected in February to replace current DNC Chair **Terry McAuliffe**.

Dean, a man who indeed played a role in energizing many of those younger voters who had long ago given up on the Democratic Party, however, would, due to his wild-eyed brand of politics, do more to help energize the Republicans against a future Democratic nominee than help the party of Kennedy, Clinton, and Kerry. As chairperson of the national Democratic Party, Dean would be just what **Karl Rove** and his devious political allies would pray for as they look to build up another Republican candidate — think Florida Governor **Jeb Bush** — for a White House race in 2008. That's right, Bush, despite any current denials, is first on Rove's list to succeed his brother, **George W.**, as the lame-duck Bush Two is termed out after the next four years.

For the record, it should be said that Dean has pledged that if he is selected as party chair he would not, under any circumstances, seek the presidency in 2008.

Last week, Dean, speaking to a crowd of cheering students and faculty at George Washington University, correctly told them that Democratic Party leaders in the coming years must define themselves to the American public in a way that underscores their differences with the Republicans. Dean, of course, is absolutely right when he said that the Democratic Party needs to be rebuilt, "not from the consultants down, but from the ground up."

Indeed, Dean, a force to be reckoned with in the Democratic Party, says all the right things and is a somewhat talented politician, but not, in my opinion, the right one to lead the national party.

Democrats badly need new leadership and will get a new chair in early 2005, but let's leave Dean out of the mix; the guy can hardly expect to be tapped to lead a party that he spent most of his failed campaign attacking anyway. Dean shouldn't be counted out, however, as supporters have launched a number of Web sites and are circulating online petitions to lobby DNC members to make him the next party chair.

Others in the race to succeed McAuliffe include **James Blanchard**, the former governor of Michigan; **Wellington Webb**, a



Assemblyman Mark Leno (D-San Francisco), left, meets with NAACP President Julian Bond Sunday, December 12 at the American Civil Liberties Union's 70th anniversary and Bill of Rights Day celebration at the San Jose Fairmont Hotel. Leno said that he spoke with Bond for about 30 minutes and while the NAACP has not taken a stand on his newly introduced Religious Freedom and Civil Marriage Protection Act, Bond himself is supportive of the bill. The California Council of Churches also supports the bill, Leno said.

former mayor of Denver; **Harold Ickes**, a longtime party leader and Clinton associate; and Representative **Martin Frost** (D-Texas), who lost his seat last month in a re-election contest after Texas Republicans, led by Representative **Tom DeLay** (D-Texas) redrew Frost's district to make it a heavily Republican seat.

Frost, while recognizing he would likely lose his race in the new heavily-GOP district, ran a tough campaign nevertheless, and nearly won despite the odds against him. "I chose to fight in that district and the next Democratic Party chair needs to be a fighter," Frost said last week.

Another dark-horse candidate for party chair is South Carolina political strategist **Donald Fowler**, a little-known but highly respected political consultant who scolded party leaders for having ceded huge parts of the country to the Republicans.

It was Webb, however, who caught the ear of many in attendance at the Democratic gathering when he talked about the trouble Democrats face in West Virginia as a symptom of how the GOP had outmaneuvered the Democrats. "In West Virginia, the issues are the three g's: God, guns, and gays. We have to be able to address those issues."

Former Dallas Mayor **Ron Kirk**, another DNC candidate, got the best reception at last weekend's meeting. "There are too many Americans who see our Democratic Party as nothing more than a coalition of disparate voices, and they don't understand our basic principles — and that's our fault," Kirk said.

I have no idea who Democratic Party leaders will choose to be their next chairperson, but if I were to toss in a couple of possible candidates it would likely be two not even mentioned at the weekend meeting: former Representative **David Bonior** (D-Michigan), a brilliant political tactician who would likely take the job if offered; and former President **Bill Clinton**, truly the best politician in the business today, who would most certainly not accept the job if offered.



Our Man Friday

A special holiday request

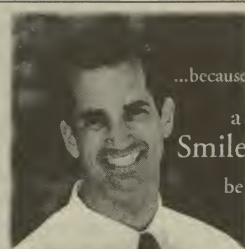
From time to time I learn of organizations important to our community that are, due to the budget crisis, facing drastic cuts. A couple of years ago, for example, Coming Home Hospice was facing budget problems and many readers came to its aid; I really appreciated that. Let me tell you about one of my favorite organizations — the **Tenderloin AIDS Resource Center**. This group has been working since 1990 to tackle the issues of HIV/AIDS and homelessness in the Tenderloin and is but one of the truly great groups in the area that face budget cuts that ultimately could put it out of business altogether. We cannot let that happen. TARC grew from the advocacy work of the Tenderloin AIDS Network, which correctly envisioned that the HIV/AIDS epidemic would have a huge impact on the residents of the Tenderloin. In fact, since 2002 the Tenderloin community annually now comprises the largest number of new AIDS cases in the city.

This year alone, TARC worked with over 972 people living with HIV/AIDS providing them with case management, HIV treatment education, medication management, emergency housing, primary medical care, and social and mental health services. Outreach workers tested more than 1,500 people for HIV, and they made thousands of face-to-face contacts with people who are at the highest risk for becoming infected, providing them with life-saving prevention education and counseling.

Expanding its syringe exchange from Wednesdays to include the only site operating on Sundays, they've provided over 7,000 clean syringes every month preventing the spread of HIV and hepatitis C among injection drug users. TARC also has a long established relationship with the transgender community.

In addition to its service delivery, what's so great about TARC is that it is relevant and cutting-edge in the way it addresses the very specific issues that residents of the Tenderloin face daily: the agency is open seven days a week, which for homeless residents is a huge benefit. Being open weekends has a positive effect on the families

page 15 ►



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9/02



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HRC

◀ page 1

advancing as her temporary replacements. Berman, a Democratic lobbyist, is the first heterosexual co-chair of the board, and Rosen, the partner of former HRC Executive Director Elizabeth Birch, has been quoted as supporting a middle-of-the-road approach to LGBT rights.

The article said that HRC was considering supporting President Bush's plans to privatize Social Security in exchange for gay partners being able to collect benefits from the program. It went on to say that HRC was among the groups that believed aggressively pursuing same-sex marriage helped the Republicans secure victory this fall, and that the group would instead begin pushing for change incrementally.

HRC was inundated with calls and e-mails about the organization's reported shift, but in reality, a moderate, incremental approach has always been the strategy of HRC, whose leadership was happy to endorse Democratic presidential candidate John Kerry despite the fact that he did not support gay marriage.

And while HRC released responses to the *Times* article that emphasized, "Tactics change, goals do not," in truth, not even the strategies of the organization will change that much, said HRC board member Scott Wiener of San Francisco.

"The *Times* article was completely inaccurate. HRC supports full marriage equality," said Wiener, pointing out that the one thing the piece did get right was that HRC would begin to try to personalize — rather than politicize — issues of LGBT equality, by getting the stories of LGBT Americans out into the public about how discrimination has affected them.

"I don't think HRC is heading in a more conservative direction as a result of this election. HRC understands the hate-spin that Karl Rove and some of our allies have unfortunately adopted that gay marriage was the reason for the outcome of this election. Gay marriage was not the reason Bush won the election," said Wiener, who added that HRC also will not back away from transgender inclusion in the Employment Non-

Discrimination Act, and does not support Social Security privatization, although if Bush's plan moves ahead the organization will push for gay partner inclusion.

Rather than "slowing down," HRC will simply adjust its goals on a state-by-state basis, he said. In states like California or Massachusetts, the organization's resources would go toward securing marriage equality, while in states like Oklahoma, where there is presently no chance for gay marriage, short-term goals may be securing hospital visitation rights for gay couples. Incremental goals would be arrived at in consultation with local groups.

"Really, it isn't different. But we're trying to clarify and articulate what our overall strategy should be because there are a lot of disagreements in the community about what exactly we should be fighting for and what we should be calling it, and whether we should be fighting for different things in different places," said Wiener.

"We need to be even more aggressive," echoed J. Smith, spokesman for HRC headquarters in Washington, D.C. "I think we're going to go about things in a different way, but that's by personalizing the issue, not slowing things down."

In contrast to these statements, however, a *Boston Globe* article published Monday, December 13 quoted sources who said that Jacques was forced to resign from HRC because of her commitment to marriage equality despite the presidential election results.

"I'm afraid all the wrong lessons got learned by HRC," Scott Harshbarger, a former colleague of Jacques who spoke with her after her departure, told the *Globe*. HRC has refuted this article as well.

Soft on equality?

But whether HRC statements were actually misinterpreted may be beside the point. Twice now, the organization has been portrayed by major media outlets as soft on LGBT equality in the wake of the election, and that fact could be damaging in and of itself.

"A big problem arises when our national organizations, identified by the press as national LGBT spokespeople, speak to these issues without input from the grassroots communities," said Michael Goldstein, president of

the Harvey Milk LGBT Democratic Club in San Francisco, who noted that LGBT causes are hindered when the country continues to read stories about gay rights groups backing down. "Since members of the non-gay press really don't have the opportunity to understand all the dynamics involved in the queer politic, we put them at a disadvantage, and our opponents at an advantage, when we allow these organizations to lead the message."

Goldstein said he agrees with HRC's approach that calls for working with local groups on statewide goals, but that he isn't banking on the organization taking the voice of the groups to the national level.

"What may have to happen is that local groups force our voices out there so that HRC isn't the only one," he said.

Local labor leader Howard Wallace said he takes issue with HRC's rebuttals to the news articles because their spin makes it difficult to determine which promises are solid.

If HRC has already decided to push for partner inclusion in a Social Security privatization bill, "then that's supporting it," he said. "That means you're helping it. If they are opposing the bill, then they should absolutely oppose the bill. Eventually there's going to be a vote on it, so where do they stand on Social Security privatization? Are they prepared to do to senior citizens what Enron did to its stockholders?"

He also said that HRC's "personalization" approach seems like a shutting down of the movement, with the organization basically saying, "We ought not to be talking about these issues and instead just get to know each other."

Wallace, like many, also has his questions about a heterosexual co-chair of a gay rights organization.

"We need straight spokespeople. We can't just have lesbians and gays talking about marriage. But we want to show our faces to the country and our personalities, and it makes that person much less convincing if they are speaking for the whole organization on a regular basis."

Wiener disagrees.

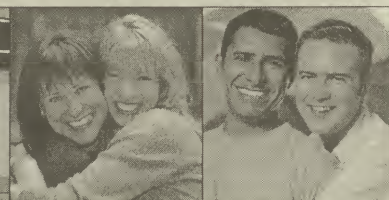
"Mike [Berman] has been on the board for five or six years and has an amazing history of activism in the Democratic Party that dates back to the 1960s and 1970s. He's a brilliant political strategist and has enormous credibility on Capitol Hill. He's exactly what a straight ally should be. He's passionate about the community's goals and absolutely committed to achieving them. We feel very comfortable having him in a leadership position." ▼

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COMMUNITY NEWS

Hormel

◀ page 5

tionally, a member-led forum revolving around LGBT topics takes place a few times a year.

"We've been ramping up our focus, and obviously trying to be accessible to the diverse community of the Bay Area," said Duffy.

Founded in 1903 as a forum in which controversial ideas could be discussed intelligently, the Commonwealth Club has hosted a long line of prominent speakers, from Teddy Roosevelt to Martin Luther King Jr. to Erin Brockovich. The club's ability to give voice to divergent viewpoints attracts a variety of speakers who may not feel comfortable in other forums, and that is "exactly why we don't take positions on issues," said Duffy.

The club may "take a lot of

heat" for its nonpartisanship, she said, but it also knows how to advocate for reform simply by opening up the conversation and allowing listeners and participants to hear all the information.

"We select topics that are controversial with the viewpoint that it is important that some action be taken by society. Gay marriage is a major societal issue for the United States, and we do believe it needs to be addressed. We won't say exactly how, but we will do programs on it and create a dialogue around it in circles where it has not been before," said Duffy. "The premise on which the Commonwealth Club was founded is that people may vehemently disagree about issues, but there is a value in listening to one another's viewpoint in a civil manner. We all at least share enough hope in the future of society to be able to lis-

ten to each other with respect."

Hormel said joining this board is part of a larger plan to serve the community, particularly as the country prepares for four more years of the Bush administration.

"In recent weeks I've been giving a great deal of thought as to what I might be doing now that it's quite apparent the nation at large is in need of education and awareness on issues relating to the LGBT community," said Hormel, who added that he does not believe that gay marriage cost the Democrats the election. "Every examined piece of election data indicates it was not the same-sex marriage issue that produced the result, and I find it very interesting that so many people were eager to claim that in the beginning. I don't think they are claiming that anymore."

As for gay marriage rights, Hormel said, "backing off is not an option," and as he prepares to take his seat on the Commonwealth Club board, he will also be deciding where else to devote his energies and resources. ▼

For more information visit
www.commonwealthclub.org

AIDS programs

◀ page 3

this round. Well there is no way this will happen without going to the business community."

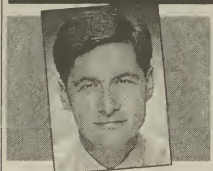
After the vote last week, the bureau's CEO and president, John Marks, e-mailed members urging them to contact the supervisors to protest the planned cut.

According to Marks, the bureau would have been forced to reduce staffing and programs by at least half for the remainder of this fiscal year and most likely into the next year, beginning in July.

"Since there was discussion about all recipients of city funding needing to 'share in the pain' brought about by lower tax revenue, I took the opportunity to

point out that the bureau's allocation from the hotel room tax has already been reduced by \$1.28 million (14.8 percent) since 2001 and we've reduced staffing by 8 percent in that same period," wrote Marks in an e-mail to members. ▼

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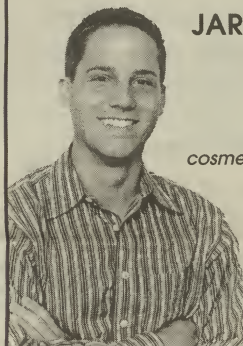
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SF club promoter rings in 20 years

by Matthew S. Bajko

Since New Year's Eve 1985 San Francisco native Gus Bean has proven to be a true colossus in the city's late night party scene. From his first party in a community gymnasium in the Western Addition, Bean has gone on to launch some of the city's hottest nightspots.

To mark his 20th anniversary, Bean is hosting five different parties over New Year's weekend, including a revival of Underworld – his underwear parties from the early 1990s – on January 1 to celebrate his 40th birthday.

"I basically have always loved entertaining people," said Bean. "Even in high school I was known for throwing huge house parties."

The New Year's baby cut his teeth as a party promoter hosting keggers at his parent's Sea Cliff home and made a name for himself among the Marin and Pacific Heights high school set. Following the success of his first New Year's

party, Bean went on to host mainly straight underground parties at various venues throughout the city, from a Mission District mortuary to a Polk Street Thai restaurant.

One night in 1988, legendary local DJ Steve Fabus found himself in attendance at one of Bean's parties. Promoter Ron Baer had brought Fabus to town to help reopen Dreamland and the Trocadero, a legendary San Francisco gay bar.

Fabus approached Bean to help him promote a new Saturday night at the club. Christened Crew by Bean, the party became an overnight sensation.

"It was one of the first places where House music was played in San Francisco," said Bean.

The Crew parties lasted a year and a half, and Bean then turned his attention to 1015 Folsom, which at the time he recalled was a dying straight, new wave club. On New Year's Eve 1990 Bean threw his first Colossus party at the South of Market club. With 2,000

people inside, and another 1,000 waiting in line to get in, the party hit a chord with a gay community ready to celebrate a new decade after surviving the AIDS epidemic of the 1980s.

Opening night did not come without a hitch. At the height of the evening, several fire trucks pulled up outside and shut down entrance to the club.

"A jealous bartender from one of the bars, which will remain unnamed – we drained every other bar dry in one night – called the fire department," recalled Bean. "They stopped entry and started to eject people from the club. I was able to, on the spot, reason with the fire marshal and he allowed us to continue. It was a sell-out crowd, several hundred people did not make it in. We had 500 or 600 people stuck outside all night."

Little did Bean know that evening that Colossus would become the Studio 54 of the West Coast. The club drew an eclectic mix of straight and gay parties as well as celebrities who flocked to the club's VIP room when in town. Everyone from Grace Jones and Madonna to Jimmy Somerville and Linda Blair tasted Bean's nightlife serving.

According to Bean, Gianni Versace also met his killer Andrew Cunanan in the club's VIP room one night. In the fall of 1990 Versace, in town creating costumes for the San Francisco Opera, partied two weekends in a row at the club. After Versace's death in 1997, the club became a place of legend.



"King of Clubs" Gus Bean will host five parties over New Year's weekend.

"Colossus lasted two and a half action packed years. It was pretty cosmopolitan and a racy environment," remembered Bean. "We had a full on VIP room that was the real deal with strict entry. Lots of funny things were going on in the corners."

By 1992 the now-closed 177 Club Townsend began hosting a rave-styled night that competed directly with Colossus. Seeing a new trend about to be born, Bean decided the time had come to move on.

"Colossus went out on a high note. Nine months later I opened at Sound Factory on New Year's Eve 1993 with a party called Cyclops," said Bean. "We had 3,200 people show up. An hour into the party, a CHP officer came in to the club and found me to tell me the line was going on to the Bay Bridge on-ramps."

Yet six months later Bean was moving on again and saying adieu to Cyclops. Bean had better luck in terms of longevity with his Friday night underwear parties,

which he began in 1991 and held at various locations until 1997.

"We had 1,000 boys dancing in their underwear. It was a lot of fun and a big money maker for me," he said.

The next big wave for nightlife hit in 1997 with the advent of the circuit party, and Bean was ready for the ride with Mass, which has been going on for eight and a half years. It also marked Bean's return to 1015 Folsom, where the parties are held the first Sunday of the month.

"The market changed and you saw the whole circuit party thing with more moneyed muscle boys and their disposable incomes," said Bean. "There was lots of traveling, higher production values, and higher ticket prices. It also gave birth to the rock star DJ, the superstar DJ. You were paying huge amounts of money for almost the DJ as celebrity. Nowadays the DJ is a huge draw. It wasn't always that way."

In August 1997 Bean tapped

page 19 ►



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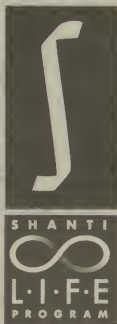


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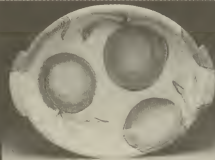
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IMPORTANT SAFETY INFORMATION:

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Tell your healthcare provider right away if you have any side effects or conditions, including the following:

- **A change in the way your heart beats** may occur and could be a symptom of a heart problem.
- **Diabetes and high blood sugar** may occur in patients taking protease inhibitor medicines like Reyataz.
- **Yellowing of the skin and/or eyes** may occur due to increases in bilirubin levels in the blood (bilirubin is made by the liver).
- **Rash** (redness and itching) sometimes occurs in patients taking Reyataz, most often in the first few weeks after the medicine is started, and usually goes away within two weeks with no change in treatment.
- **If you have liver disease**, including hepatitis B or C, your liver disease may get worse when you take anti-HIV medicines like Reyataz.
- **Some patients with hemophilia** have increased bleeding problems with protease inhibitor medicines like Reyataz.

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REYATAZ does not cure HIV infection or AIDS. At present there is no cure for HIV infection. People taking REYATAZ may still get opportunistic infections or other conditions that happen with HIV infection. Opportunistic infections are infections that develop because the immune system is weak. Some of these conditions are pneumonia, herpes virus infections, and *Mycobacterium avium* complex (MAC) infections. It is very important that you see your healthcare provider regularly while taking REYATAZ.

REYATAZ does not lower your chance of passing HIV to other people through sexual contact, sharing needles, or being exposed to your blood. For your health and the health of others, it is important to always practice safer sex by using a latex or polyurethane condom or other barrier to lower the chance of sexual contact with semen, vaginal secretions, or blood. Never use or share dirty needles.

Who should not take REYATAZ?**Do not take REYATAZ if you:**

- are taking certain medicines. (See "What important information should I know about taking REYATAZ with other medicines?") Serious life-threatening side effects or death may happen. Before you take REYATAZ, tell your healthcare provider about all medicines you are taking or planning to take. These include other prescription and nonprescription medicines, vitamins, and herbal supplements.
- are allergic to REYATAZ or to any of its ingredients. The active ingredient is atazanavir sulfate. See the end of this leaflet for a complete list of ingredients in REYATAZ. Tell your healthcare provider if you think you have had an allergic reaction to any of these ingredients.

What should I tell my healthcare provider before I take REYATAZ?**Tell your healthcare provider:**

- If you are pregnant or planning to become pregnant. It is not known if REYATAZ can harm your unborn baby. Pregnant women have experienced serious side effects when taking REYATAZ with other HIV medicines called nucleoside analogues. You and your healthcare provider will need to decide if REYATAZ is right for you. If you use REYATAZ while you are pregnant, talk to your healthcare provider about the Antiretroviral Pregnancy Registry.
- If you are breast-feeding. You should not breast-feed if you are HIV-positive because of the chance of passing HIV to your baby. Also, it is not known if REYATAZ can pass into your breast milk and if it can harm your baby. If you are a woman who has or will have a baby, talk with your healthcare provider about the best way to feed your baby.
- If you have liver problems or are infected with the hepatitis B or C virus. See "What are the possible side effects of REYATAZ?"
- If you have diabetes. See "What are the possible side effects of REYATAZ?"
- If you have hemophilia. See "What are the possible side effects of REYATAZ?"
- About all the medicines you take, including prescription and nonprescription medicines, vitamins, and herbal supplements. Keep a list of your medicines with you to show your healthcare provider. For more information, see "What important information should I know about taking REYATAZ with other medicines?" and "Who should not take REYATAZ?" Some medicines can cause serious side effects if taken with REYATAZ.

How should I take REYATAZ?

- Take REYATAZ once every day exactly as instructed by your healthcare provider. Your healthcare provider will prescribe the amount of REYATAZ that is right for you.
 - For adults who have never taken anti-HIV medicines before, the usual dose is 400 mg (two 200-mg capsules) once daily taken with food.
 - For adults who have taken anti-HIV medicines in the past, the usual dose is 300 mg (two 150-mg capsules) plus 100 mg of NORVIR® (ritonavir) once daily taken with food.

Your dose will depend on your liver function and on the other anti-HIV medicines that you are taking. REYATAZ is always used with other anti-HIV medicines. If you are taking REYATAZ with SUSTIVA® (efavirenz) or with VIREAD® (tenofovir disoproxil fumarate), you should also be taking NORVIR® (ritonavir).

- Always take REYATAZ with food (a meal or snack) to help it work better. Swallow the capsules whole. Do not open the capsules. Take REYATAZ at the same time each day.
- If you are taking antacids or VIDEK® (didanosine) Chewable/Dispersible Buffered Tablets, take REYATAZ 2 hours before or 1 hour after these medicines.
- Do not change your dose or stop taking REYATAZ without first talking with your healthcare provider. It is important to stay under a healthcare provider's care while taking REYATAZ.
- When your supply of REYATAZ starts to run low, get more from your healthcare provider or pharmacy. It is important not to run out of REYATAZ. The amount of HIV in your blood may increase if the medicine is stopped for even a short time.
- If you miss a dose of REYATAZ, take it as soon as possible and then take your next scheduled dose at its regular time. If, however, it is within 6 hours of your next dose, do not take the missed dose. Wait and take the next dose at the regular time. Do not double the next dose. It is important that you do not miss any doses of REYATAZ or your other anti-HIV medicines.
- If you take more than the prescribed dose of REYATAZ, call your healthcare provider or poison control center right away.

Can children take REYATAZ?

REYATAZ has not been fully studied in children under 16 years of age. REYATAZ should not be used in babies under the age of 3 months.

What are the possible side effects of REYATAZ?

The following list of side effects is not complete. Report any new or continuing symptoms to your healthcare provider. If you have questions about side effects, ask your healthcare provider. Your healthcare provider may be able to help you manage these side effects.

The following side effects have been reported with REYATAZ:

- rash (redness and itching) sometimes occurs in patients taking REYATAZ, most often in the first few weeks after the medicine is started. Rashes usually go away within 2 weeks with no change in treatment. Tell your healthcare provider if rash occurs.
- yellowing of the skin or eyes. These effects may be due to increases in bilirubin levels in the blood (bilirubin is made by the liver). Call your healthcare provider if your skin or the white part of your eyes turn yellow. Although these effects may not be damaging to your liver, skin, or eyes, it is important to tell your healthcare provider promptly if they occur.
- a change in the way your heart beats (heart rhythm change). Call your healthcare provider right away if you get dizzy or lightheaded. These could be symptoms of a heart problem.
- diabetes and high blood sugar (hyperglycemia) sometimes happen in patients taking protease inhibitor medicines like REYATAZ. Some patients had diabetes before taking protease inhibitors while others did not. Some patients may need changes in their diabetes medicine.
- if you have liver disease including hepatitis B or C, your liver disease may get worse when you take anti-HIV medicines like REYATAZ.

- some patients with hemophilia have increased bleeding problems with protease inhibitors like REYATAZ.
- changes in body fat. These changes may include an increased amount of fat in the upper back and neck ("buffalo hump"), breast, and around the trunk. Loss of fat from the legs, arms, and face may also happen. The cause and long-term health effects of these conditions are not known at this time.

Other common side effects of REYATAZ taken with other anti-HIV medicines include nausea; headache; stomach pain; vomiting; diarrhea; depression; fever; dizziness; trouble sleeping; numbness, tingling, or burning of hands or feet; and muscle pain.

What important information should I know about taking REYATAZ with other medicines?

Do not take REYATAZ if you take the following medicines (not all brands may be listed; tell your healthcare provider about all the medicines you take). REYATAZ may cause serious, life-threatening side effects or death when used with these medicines.

- Ergot medicines: dihydroergotamine, ergonovine, ergotamine, and methylergonovine such as CAFERGOT®, MIGRANAL®, D.H.E. 45®, ergotrate maleate, METHERGINE®, and others (used for migraine headaches).
- HALCION® (triazolam, used for insomnia).
- VERSED® (midazolam, used for sedation).
- DRAP® (pimozide, used for Tourette's disorder).
- PROPULSID® (cisapride, used for certain stomach problems).

Do not take the following medicines with REYATAZ because of possible serious side effects:

- CAMPTOSAR® (irinotecan, used for cancer).
- CRIVIAN® (indinavir, used for HIV infection). Both REYATAZ and CRIVIAN sometimes cause increased levels of bilirubin in the blood.
- Cholesterol-lowering medicines MEVACOR® (lovastatin) or ZOCOR® (simvastatin).

Do not take the following medicines with REYATAZ because they may lower the amount of REYATAZ in your blood. This may lead to an increased HIV viral load. Resistance to REYATAZ or cross-resistance to other HIV medicines may develop:

- Rifampin (also known as RIMACTANE®, RIFADIN®, RIFATER®, or RIFAMATE®), used for tuberculosis).
- St. John's wort (*Hypericum perforatum*), an herbal product sold as a dietary supplement, or products containing St. John's wort.
- "Proton-pump inhibitors" used for indigestion, heartburn, or ulcers such as AcipHex® (rabeprazole), NEXIUM® (esomeprazole), PREVACID® (lansoprazole), PRILOSEC® (omeprazole), or PROTONIX® (pantoprazole).

Do not take the following medicines if you are taking REYATAZ and NORVIR® together:

- VFEND® (voriconazole).

The following medicines may require your healthcare provider to monitor your therapy more closely:

- CIALIS® (tadalafil), LEVITRA® (vardenafil), or VIAGRA® (sildenafil). REYATAZ may increase the chances of serious side effects that can happen with CIALIS, LEVITRA, or VIAGRA. Do not use CIALIS, LEVITRA, or VIAGRA while you are taking REYATAZ unless your healthcare provider tells you it is okay.
- LIPTOR® (atorvastatin). There is an increased chance of serious side effects if you take REYATAZ with this cholesterol-lowering medicine.
- Medicines for abnormal heart rhythm: CORDARONE® (amiodarone), lidocaine, quinidine (also known as CARDIOQUIN®, QUINIDEX®, and others).
- VASCOR® (bedril, used for chest pain).
- COUMADIN® (warfarin).
- Tricyclic antidepressants such as ELAVIL® (amitriptyline), NORPRAMIN® (desipramine), SINEQUAN® (doxepin), SURMONTIL® (trimipramine), TOFRANIL® (imipramine), or VIVACTIL® (protriptyline).
- Medicines to prevent organ transplant rejection: SANDIMMUNE® or NEORAL® (cyclosporine), RAPAMUNE® (sirolimus), or PROGRAF® (tacrolimus).

The following medicines may require a change in the dose or dose schedule of either REYATAZ or the other medicine:

- FORTOVASE®, INVIRASE® (saquinavir).
- NORVIR® (ritonavir).
- SUSTIVA® (efavirenz).
- VIDEK® (didanosine) or antacids.
- VIREAD® (tenofovir disoproxil fumarate).
- MYCOBUTIN® (rifabutin).
- Calcium channel blockers such as CARDIZEM® or TIAZAC® (diltiazem), COVERA-HS® or ISOPTIN SR® (verapamil) and others.
- BIAVIN® (clarithromycin).
- Medicines for indigestion, heartburn, or ulcers such as AXID® (nizatidine), PEPICID AC® (famotidine), TAGAMET® (cimetidine), or ZANTAC® (ranitidine).

Women who use birth control pills or "the patch" should choose a different kind of contraception. REYATAZ may affect the safety and effectiveness of birth control pills or the patch. Talk to your healthcare provider about choosing an effective contraceptive.

Remember:

1. Know all the medicines you take.
2. Tell your healthcare provider about all the medicines you take.
3. Do not start a new medicine without talking to your healthcare provider.

How should I store REYATAZ?

- Store REYATAZ (atazanavir sulfate) Capsules at room temperature, 59° to 86° F (15° to 30° C). Do not store this medicine in a damp place such as a bathroom medicine cabinet or near the kitchen sink.
- Keep your medicine in a tightly closed container.
- Throw away REYATAZ when it is outdated or no longer needed by flushing it down the toilet or pouring it down the sink.

General information about REYATAZ

This medicine was prescribed for your particular condition. Do not use REYATAZ for another condition. Do not give REYATAZ to other people, even if they have the same symptoms you have. It may harm them. Keep REYATAZ and all medicines out of the reach of children and pets.

This summary does not include everything there is to know about REYATAZ. Medicines are sometimes prescribed for conditions that are not mentioned in patient information leaflets. Remember, no written summary can replace careful discussion with your healthcare provider. If you would like more information, talk with your healthcare provider or you can call 1-800-426-7644.

What are the ingredients in REYATAZ?

Active ingredient: atazanavir sulfate

Inactive ingredients: Crospovidone, lactose monohydrate (milk sugar), magnesium stearate, gelatin, FD&C Blue #2, and titanium dioxide.

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NATIONAL NEWS

Army strikes down sodomy law

by Bob Roehr

The U.S. Army Court of Criminal Appeals has struck down the last remaining vestige of sodomy laws in the United States. The outcome of the case, known as *U.S. v. Bullock*, became known in early December.

The U.S. Supreme Court struck down all of the remaining state sodomy laws in the *Lawrence* decision, issued in June 2003. But a lingering question remained as to whether *Lawrence* also applied to Article 125, the sodomy provisions, of the Universal Code of Military Justice. The UCMJ is the equivalent of law within the armed forces.

The courts traditionally have given great deference to the military in managing internal affairs. Constitutional rights may be impinged upon if the military can justify such action, though they do not have a completely free hand to do so.

In this case, Army specialist Kenneth Bullock was convicted of engaging in oral sex with a female civilian in a military barracks. In overturning that conviction, the appeals court cited *Lawrence* and explicitly extended its precedent to the UCMJ.

"Even in the military you have a zone of privacy and can engage in sexual acts in private that used to be considered criminal," said Lambda Legal Defense and Education Fund attorney Patricia Logue in explaining the significance of the case.

Servicemembers Legal Defense Network Executive Director C. Dixon Osburn called the decision "an encouraging and important first step in recognizing service

members' privacy rights. Private, consensual conduct in the bedroom has no impact on the battlefield."

"What's most remarkable about the case is that the Court of Appeals concluded that sex in the barracks itself has an insufficient military connection to overcome the essentially private and personal character of that activity," said James Garland, a professor at Hofstra Law School.

While the *Bullock* decision involved sex between heterosexuals, Garland believes the decision shifts the burden of proof in discharging gays from the military so that the Pentagon will have to demonstrate how the homosexual activity in question is detrimental to military readiness.

The sodomy provisions of Article 125 have been props that legally and emotionally support the antigay policy known as "Don't Ask, Don't Tell." The *Bul-*

lock decision can be seen as another step toward removing that policy, some observers said.

The Pentagon has the option of appealing *Bullock* to the Court of Appeals for the Armed Forces or even to the U.S. Supreme Court.

The first body ducked the constitutional issue in August in deciding the case of *U.S. v. Marcum*. It focused instead upon the fact that Sergeant Eric Marcum engaged in consensual sexual activity with an airman under his chain of command.

It reaffirmed Marcum's guilt because it occurred in a situation "where consent might not easily be refused." The court set up a situation where differences in rank are parallel to the legal status of statutory rape, where a minor cannot legally give consent to sexual activity. But it left open the possibility of applying the *Lawrence* decision in another context. ▼

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Our Man Friday

◀ page 9

and businesses living and working in the Tenderloin - TARC provides basic needs such as access to bathrooms, telephones, a drop-in space, and referrals for shelter services that get people off the streets and into services. Its daily clinic program also offers a safe place for homeless clients to access daily medications, such as antiretrovirals. Such assistance is vital for the many homeless residents living with HIV.

I tell you this because I know TARC well. The epicenter of the AIDS epidemic in the city is no longer in the Castro but has moved into the Tenderloin in large part because of the residents' poverty, homelessness, mental illness, and substance use. I don't need to tell anyone that homelessness and HIV are serious co-existing problems that continue to heavily impact the Tenderloin.

I'm reminded, too, that this is the holiday season and we can't ignore our brothers and sisters who are less fortunate than we are - we can help. I'm sending them a check, and I'm urging you to please write a check to TARC - it doesn't matter the size. You can find out more about this great organization at www.tarc.org and you can send a donation to: TARC, P.O. Box 423930, SF, CA 94142.

Again, many thanks - TARC needs your help badly.

And how was your week? ▼

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Canada

◀ page 1

lower court decisions that addressed more directly the constitutionality of same-sex marriage.

"It ratifies the more powerful living reality that is already taking place on the ground," said Wolfson. "The precedent has some effect but even more powerful is the actual change of reality of exclusion ending - in the living example of Canadians in the day-to-day lives of these families."

"Canada will demonstrate to Americans that respecting people's civil rights makes a society stronger," said Alex Munter, co-chair of Canadians for Equal Marriage.

During debate on Canadian values in the country's last election, approval for gay marriage grew by 10 percent.

Munter said 28 lower court judges all came to the same conclusion, that it's contrary to the constitution to exclude gays and lesbians from marriage.

Eighteen months ago, former Prime Minister Jean Chretien ended his fight against marriage equality by refusing to appeal pro-marriage equality in provincial court. The government then drafted a bill allowing same-sex weddings in city halls, courthouses, and willing churches. To clarify the bill's legality it asked the court if the government has exclusive authority to define marriage, if the charter protects religious groups from having to perform the weddings against their beliefs, and if the proposed same-sex marriage law was constitutional.

The Supreme Court said yes to all three.

Respect for equality

Kevin Bourassa and Joe Varnell, sponsored by Metropolitan Community Church-Toronto and several law firms working pro bono, challenged Ontario's marriage laws through their MCC

wedding in 2003. They were the first same-sex couple in Canada to wed.

After Bourassa, 43, a former magazine editor, met Varnell, 55, a banking computer consultant, through mutual friends in 1997, Bourassa invited Varnell to a MCC service.

"Joe jokes that if I had invited him to a tractor pull he would have come," said Bourassa.

Both men were raised Catholic by parents they call models of long-term monogamy.

Furthermore, Bourassa, who now works full time as a marriage equality activist, believes that through love, human rights work, and reinterpreting the Bible, LGBT communities of faith will "cleanse religion of toxins."

"We have an obligation to return the gratitude, inspired by the support from people all over the world," said Bourassa.

He was critical of opponents of same-sex marriage in his country.

"The Alliance Party [conservative] is unelectable as long as they embrace bigotry," said Bourassa.

"The conservative party knows they lost the last election because of their stand against human rights. If they are ever to hold reigns of power they must be inclusive, a big tent."

The court's broadening of Canada's marriage definition lies in its Charter of Rights and Freedoms, which is similar to the U.S. Bill of Rights.

The charter, first envisioned by the late former Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau in 1982, has been referred to as a "living tree" and, along with universal health care, is central to the nation's identity.

Bourassa noted the country's "enormous respect" for the equality manifesto because of its malleable service to democracy contrasted with the U.S. Constitution.

Bourassa called the U.S. Constitution "petrified," from a time of "white powdered wigs, when maybe you needed a gun in every

house."

Not true, said Shannon Minter, legal director at the National Center for Lesbian Rights.

"Every generation has to be free to find its own definition of freedom and find new protections in our Constitution in its search for freedom," Minter said.

Minter begins oral arguments on December 22 before San Francisco Superior Court Judge Richard Kramer for NCLR, as lead counsel with co-counsel Lambda Legal Defense and Education Fund, the American Civil Liberties Union, and several attorneys in one of California's marriage equality cases, *Woo v. Lockyer*, representing 12 same-sex couples who were not allowed to marry after the state Supreme Court stopped the San Francisco weddings in March.

Related decision

In a related decision, the Canada Supreme Court ruled that churches and religious officials couldn't be forced to perform same-gender marriages against their beliefs.

The Reverend Dr. Troy Perry, founder of MCC, welcomed that decision.

"All religious groups should have the freedom to practice the tenets of their faith," he said.

Geoffrey Kors, executive director of Equality California, drew a parallel between Canada's court decision and Assemblyman Mark Leno's (D-San Francisco) AB19, the Religious Freedom and Civil Marriage Protection Act. Leno introduced the bill last week at the start of the Legislature's new session. Leno pulled his Marriage License Non-Discrimination Act during the last session because he didn't have the vote to pass it out of the Assembly.

This time, Leno changed the bill to add specific language stating that no priest, minister, or rabbi is required to perform or officiate at a marriage against their religious beliefs.

next page ▶

Beth Stroud

◀ page 1

on this issue that members of my congregation had.

"There are still a lot of people in our country, including church ministers, who don't realize that they've ever met a gay person," she said. "In the same way that when I came out to my family, the issue of homosexuality became far more personal for them and they became much more actively supportive, loving and caring, it is my hope that some of the same thing may happen in the church."

On the other hand, she acknowledged that perhaps two-thirds of UMC members worldwide still believe that the church rule barring openly lesbian and gay people from ministry is correct.

"I have to ask myself, if I should appeal and win, if that would be healthy for the church. Would it further harden positions and disrupt the opportunity that may now exist for people to hear each other and change their perspectives?"

When asked what part of her decision would be based on what is healthy for herself, she laughed.

"Oh, yeah, I've got to look at that too."

"I'm exhausted and overwhelmed by the enormous changes that have taken place in my life in the past seven days," she said. "I'm getting some sleep, but I'm not fully caught up. I really haven't had enough time to sit

down and absorb what all of this means."

No stranger to activism

Stroud is hardly a stranger to LGBT activism. In her 20s, she served as editor of *LGNY*, the predecessor to New York's *Gay City News*. It was while interviewing four New York pastors and rabbis for a story about out gay and lesbian spiritual leaders that she heard an inner voice saying, "I don't want you to write about this. I want you to do it." That voice led her to become a minister and then come out.

"I felt that in my silence, I was not fully living out what I believed," Stroud said. "I believe that God made all people with all kinds of colors and shapes and sizes and all kinds of sexual orientations. I believe that God blesses all kinds of loving families."

"I felt I needed to take this stand as a Christian, even knowing that it might cost me my credentials. I needed to tell the truth about my life, my faith, and the way I had experienced God in my life in my relationship with my partner as a lesbian faithful to God."

Stroud met Paige in Philadelphia in 1996 while both worked for a small progressive Christian magazine. They began dating a year later, right after Stroud was ordained. The U-Haul arrived a week after their October 2000 commitment ceremony.

"I was in a place in my life where if I was going to merge pots and pans and furniture, and have

my daily life intertwined with the daily life of another person, I wanted a partner who was willing to stand up in front of God and all my friends and say 'I'm gonna stay with you,'" Stroud said.

After charges were brought against Stroud, support for the couple exceeded expectations. Church members started a legal defense fund, and promised Stroud that she could continue to work at the church regardless of the trial's outcome. At least three attorneys from the congregation contributed countless hours of pro bono legal services. Congregants also showered the couple with homemade food, enabling them to focus their energies on the ordeal ahead.

Regardless of her ultimate decision to appeal, Stroud holds to a larger vision.

"It's important for us to practice listening and compassion and start small where we are. If you want someone else to put themselves in your shoes, you have to be willing a little bit to put yourself in theirs. If you want someone to hear you, you have to be willing to hear them."

"I hope that through what I've already done, there may be some gay and lesbian people who, if they can't at this time feel the affirmation and love of the United Methodist Church, can through what I and my congregation have done at least see and hear that there are communities that really believe in justice for all people and are willing to walk the walk." ▼

OBITUARIES

Bob Bills



Bob Bills passed away peacefully on Monday, October 25, 2004 in San Francisco after a long battle with cancer. He is survived by his son, John Bills, daughter-in-law Tracie Bills, two grandchildren, Joshua and Ashley, and many dear friends in San Francisco.

Bob was born on August 21, 1936 in Sacramento, California, and moved with his parents that year to San Francisco. He graduated from Stanford and received his law degree from University of Chicago. Bob practiced law in San Francisco, Redwood City and San Jose.

Bob had a passion for cooking, public speaking, fly fishing, camping, arts and entertainment and living in San Francisco. He developed and led a walking tour through lower Pacific Heights, which he called "Saints and Sinners."

A recovering alcoholic, Bob was committed to helping others recover from alcoholism and addiction. He supported many through early recovery and leaves behind a legion of friends in the 12-step movement. He also worked for five years as an educator at a multiple-offense drunk-driving program.

Memorial contributions may be made to Stepping Stone, 255 10th Ave., SF CA 94118

Chuck L. Hilbert

The theater community in San Francisco mourns the passing of Chuck L. Hilbert on November 1, 2004. Hilbert was an actor, writer, and director who was active in local theater for more than a decade. He was a graduate of California Institute of the Arts, and for the past five years had been Manager of Communications for Paymap, a First Data company.

Hilbert began his professional career working as a costumed character at Disneyland. He later followed the Disney magic to Orlando in 1971, performing

in parades and shows during Disney World's inaugural year. After this he was active in repertory companies in Atlanta and Las Vegas before arriving in San Francisco where he became a mainstay in Bay Area theatrical pursuits. Local credits include productions with the San Jose Repertory Theater, Bayside Entertainment, the San Francisco Opera, Theatre Artaud, the Blake Street Hawkeyes, and the One Act Theatre Company.

He played a recurring role in the late-eighties detective drama *Midnight Caller*, and worked with Whoopi Goldberg in the film *Kiss Shot*. He gained infamy through his controversial work in the film documentary *Theatercity*, about a stage company which purportedly killed actors onstage as high art.

Recently, Hilbert entered the world of publishing as an editor and talent scout for Viking Press, and he was working on an adaptation of Shakespeare's *The Merry Wives of Windsor*. He was also well known for his philanthropic pursuits, including involvement in local shelters for abused children.

He is survived by a brother, Gary Hilbert, of Idaho.

Acclaimed SF magazine designer dies

by Ed Walsh

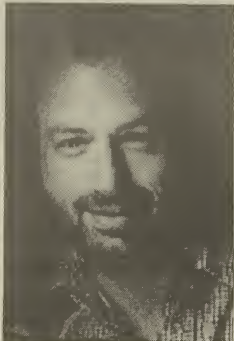
Friends and family are mourning the unexpected death of F. Darrin Perry, 39, an award-winning magazine design director who was widely acclaimed for his work at *Conde Nast*, *Sports Illustrated*, *ESPN* magazine and more recently, *Wired*. Mr. Perry lived in San Francisco and is survived by his partner, Jonathan Manzo, and his family, who reside in North Carolina where Mr. Perry was born.

Mr. Perry died on Thursday, November 25. The San Francisco Medical Examiner's office told the *Bay Area Reporter* this week that his cause of death won't be known for several weeks pending laboratory tests.

"We were partners for 10 years," Manzo told the *B.A.R.* in a brief telephone interview Wednesday. "We had a life together. He was extraordinarily talented, generous, and kind. He set high standards for himself in his professional and personal life."

Manzo said that he and Mr. Perry were registered domestic partners in New York City and had planned to get married in San Francisco earlier this year, but the weddings were halted by the state Supreme Court before they could do so.

Mr. Perry was a member of the San Francisco Fog rugby team, along with Manzo. In May, he traveled to London with the Fog in their successful defense of the Mark Kendall Bingham Memorial Cup.



F. Darrin Perry

In a eulogy that was posted on the Fog's Web site, the team's president, Pete "Porkchop" Dubois, wrote: "We remember Darrin and Jon, partners in life, playing as teammates together sometimes in opposing scrimmages, but walking off the pitch together, arm in arm. I know from Jon, those are some of his most cherished moments and experiences with Darrin."

Dubois likened Mr. Perry to "a Clark Kent/Superman character." He explained: "By day, he took on the role of the seemingly mild-mannered editor of a renowned periodical but then, running out of his downtown office changing somewhere along the way into his rugby uniform, he transformed into 'Dazza, the Rugby Warrior' to do battle on Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays. And on Monday, I can just see Darrin returning to the *Wired* office, trying to

explain away the black eye, bruises, and limping around from his aching feet."

After the Fog won the Bingham Cup, Mr. Perry wrote a note to his teammates. Dubois concluded his eulogy quoting the note: "Thank you gentlemen for the past few days - I arrived home tonight and found myself crying, crying from joy, but also from sadness that the moment is now behind us. What a privilege and honor it has been to practice, support and play along side each of you."

"With heart and soul I salute you all. Love, Dazza," Mr. Perry concluded, using his nickname.

A memorial was held in San Francisco on December 1.

A celebration of Mr. Perry's life was held in North Carolina on December 5. In lieu of flowers, the family asked that donations be made to the North Carolina School of the Arts, "a place that allowed Darrin to first cultivate his passion and love of the arts." The family also suggested that donations be sent to the Human Rights Campaign, "an organization that was a voice for his beliefs."

Contributions may be mailed to NC School of the Arts at N.C.S.A. Foundation Inc. Attn: Sarah Turner, 1533 South Main Street, Winston-Salem, NC 27127-2188 and the Human Rights Campaign Foundation, c/o Timothy Mahoney, Human Rights Campaign Foundation, 1640 Rhode Island Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036. Be sure to note that the donation is in Mr. Perry's memory. ▼

hest of elected representatives without the court having to weigh in.

Other countries

Other countries are moving ahead in recognizing same-sex relationships.

Last week New Zealand passed a civil union bill allowing same-sex couples to register their relationships with the government and giving them many rights enjoyed by heterosexual couples.

In South Africa, the first country in the world whose constitution provides gay and lesbian legal protections, a court ruled this week that same-sex marriages must be recognized in the same way as heterosexual marriages, under the nation's constitution.

An Israeli district court ruled that same-sex couples must have the same rights as common law couples in matters of property, taxation, and inheritance and will also be able to transfer gifts between themselves without paying taxes.

"The prayers of the ancient prophet who prayed that 'justice might roll down as waters, and righteousness like a mighty stream' are being answered in this birthplace of our faith," said MCC's Perry. "With all the talk today about moral values in the aftermath of the U.S. elections, the reality is that the most noble moral values of tolerance, acceptance, equality, and justice are being advanced in many places around the globe." ▼

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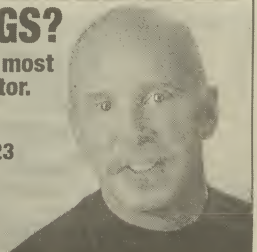
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Canada

◀ page 16

Kors noted the distinction between a civil marriage process performed by a county clerk, which requires legal rights and responsibilities, and a religious wedding ceremony.

"It ensures that First Amendment rights are protected," said Kors.

Kors believes the Canada decision will "have a huge influence on public opinion."

And, he said, unlike Canada's movement coming with the involvement of the Supreme Court, "California is unique in North America" because domestic partner legislation has come at the be-

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TOYS FOR TOTS

Sporty splice: The best gay sports films

by Jim Provenzano

Billy Bean's memoir, *Going the Other Way*, about his struggles as a closeted pro baseball player, is in development to become a Showtime movie. Set to be produced by the prolific gay team of Craig Zadan and Neil Meron and directed by *Six Feet Under* executive producer Alan Poul, it promises to be a fascinating look into the world of a gay athlete.

Until that film's on the small screen, however, here are some other notable gay and lesbian sports films. Most are available on DVD or VHS, and, like Bean's memoir, would make great gifts for the athlete or sports fan on your holiday list.

2 Seconds (Director: Manon Briand, 1998, French). After Laurie (Charlotte Laurier), a bisexual competitive cyclist, loses a slot on a championship team, she becomes a bike messenger while developing a friendship with an eccentric bike-shop owner (Dino Tavarone). Their competitive love of cycling helps Laurie win back her self-esteem — and the heart of another woman.

Beautiful Boxer (Director: Ekachai Uekrongtham, 2004, Thailand). The fascinating real-life story of transgender Mu Thai kickboxer Parinya Charoenphol (known as Nong Toom in Thailand) has become an endearing and action-packed film that follows Nong's life from teenage monk to trainee in a grueling kickboxing camp to eventual fame and success. Nong's struggle to realize her dream of a sex-reassignment operation is met with resentment from athletes, but eventual acceptance from her family and promoter. The lead is played with sincerity by real-life kickboxer Asanee Suwan, and the sports scenes are powerfully authentic, more than compensating for the slightly overdone finale's sentiment.

Bend It Like Beckham (Director: Gurinder Chadha, 2002, England). Jess (Parminder K. Nagra) is in the closet — about playing soccer, and about her fascination with sports star David Beckham. Her traditional Indian family craves a wedding, and soon. When another female player (Keira Knightley) coaxes Jess to play on a women's team, this lighthearted comedy becomes a hilarious game of hidden identities and confusion. Although the movie nearly brims with sapphic desires, the only real gay character is one of Jess's male soccer pals. While the soccer scenes are a tad overdramatized, the heart of this film is in the right place.

Breaking the Surface (Director: Steven Hilliard Stern, 1997, United States). If Mario Lopez in



Asanee Suwan, left, in *Beautiful Boxer*

Speedos doesn't pique your interest, then the compelling, dramatic, real-life story of the greatest diver in U.S. history should. After being adopted as a Samoan child into a white family, Greg Louganis suffers through the pressure of his father/coach, who pushes him to success — but also away from accepting being gay. There's a lot to cover in one film, but it does show the trials Louganis faced — surviving an abusive romantic/manager relationship; HIV; the now-famous 1988 diving accident; and his subsequent fame of coming out.

Cock and Bull Story (Director: Billy Hayes, 2003, United States). Dark, brooding, violent, and disturbing: What more could one expect from the author of the autobiographical book *Midnight Express*? In between bouts of fighting in the ring, Travis (Bret Roberts) battles the corrupting influence of his friend Jacko's (Brian Austin Green) homophobic outbursts, as well as his own pugilistic form of arousal.

Gay Games VI — Sydney 2002 (Producer: Brett Heil, 2002, Australia). More than five hours in length, with an array of clear images, unobtrusive background music, and a menu of sport-by-sport options, this DVD marks the first comprehensive coverage of a global gay and lesbian athletic event. Montages for each of the Games' eight days offer a nice appetizer to the extensive footage. Sports features vary in length and depth, a few with informed voiceovers sprinkled with some saucy commentary. Bonus features include a photo gallery and complete competition results.

Iron Ladies (Director: Yongyooth Thongkonthun, 2003, Thailand). Over-the-top in campy style, this endearing and fun-filled dramatization based on the real-life Thai volleyball team breaks boundaries — and a few fingernails — as gay and transgender players rise from maligned underdogs to national champions. The 2004 sequel, *Iron Ladies II*, furthers their adventures, as one player quits the team, but is lured back for loyalty and love.

Like It Is (Director: Paul Orem-land, 1998, England). Who knew bare-knuckle boxing had such cute, young gay guys in its ranks? Steve Bell — in real life a featherweight boxing champion in

Britain — brings a realistic edge to his character's painfully awkward coming out in a jaded London gay community. Roger Daltrey of The Who captures the manipulative slyness of a wicked club manager.

My Life on Ice (Directors: Olivier Ducastel, Jacques Martineau, 2001, France). The filmmaking team that brought us the affectionate yet subtle *Adventures of Felix* offers an even more understated story of a quiet teenager realizing his gay identity. After receiving a video camera as a gift, the handsome Etienne (Jimmy Tavares) sees life through a camera lens. Between bashful interviews and voyeuristic shots of friends and family members, Etienne explores his own identity and even gets some hilarious results while trying to tape himself practicing figure skating. Even his own competition at the French Cup (a real event, with Tavares actually competing) is shown in a way that's beautiful and not sensationalized.

Personal Best (Director: Robert Towne, 1982, United States). Although now a bit dated, this is a groundbreaking lesbian film about an affair between a track star (Mariel Hemingway) and her mentor-competitor (real-life Olympic runner Patrice Donnelly). The film includes scenes from both the 1976 Olympic trials and the 1980 Moscow Games qualifying races. The race footage is both compelling and sometimes overtly sensual.

Playmakers (Directors: Various, 2003, United States). ESPN's fascinating attempt at a dramatic series about a pro football team may be too full of egos, racism, drug abuse, and hyped-up on-field action, but it does include a subplot about closeted gay player Thad Guerwitz (Daniel Petroni-jevic). Under pressure from the NFL, ESPN canceled the series, which should make you even more curious to see it. Now out on DVD.

Thin Ice (Director: Fiona Cunningham-Reid, 1994, United States). This terrific idea for combining a romance with the actual events of 1994's Gay Games IV in New York City also documents the first inclusion of figure skating in the Games and the groundbreaking same-sex doubles competition. Director and co-star Cunningham-Reid also medaled in the skating event captured in this endearing, exciting, and innovative

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COMMUNITY NEWS

Club promoter

◀ page 12

into the circuit crowd audience once again by creating Sundance at the Russian River, a weekend's worth of dance parties in the gay resort town of Guerneville. A year later, he would return to the circuit party theme with Metropolis, a monthly dance party held in an old warehouse at 550 Barnevel on the southern boundary of San Francisco.

As those parties became more popular, and promoters faced increasing difficulty finding places to throw their events, Bean changed business tactics and bought the building in 1999, transforming himself from solely a party promoter to now a club owner.

"There was huge value in having a venue with parking on a Saturday night. When I knew he was selling, I wanted to keep it to continue to throw huge gay parties," he said.

A year later he would add resort owner to his business card after purchasing the old Paradise Cove resort in Guerneville, which he and his partners remodeled and reopened as the Retreat Resort and Spa.

With the closing of Club Townsend in the summer of 2002, Bean jumped back into hosting weekly parties with the short-lived Palladium, returning to the same spot as his Cyclops parties.

"I still love Palladium but I think it was a little before its time. We were trying to marry the muscle crowd with drag queens and performance artists. We had an electroclash room upstairs but it went over the head of the mainstream club-going community," said Bean.

Two flops

Yet those short-run clubs don't rank as failures in Bean's mind. Over the years, he points to only two parties that stand out as total flops. His biggest occurred the Friday of gay Pride weekend in 1992. Held at the Warfield Theatre it featured everyone from New York drag divas Lady Bunny and Loreta Hogg to the entire House of



Club promoter Gus Bean

Fields, the voguing houses from New York made popular by Madonna's smash hit "Vogue."

The party cost \$40,000 to throw, and Bean took a hit of \$20,000.

"It was a clear case of too much, too soon. I way overshot my budget," he said. "It was marvelous but marvelously under attended and I lost my ass."

His Millennium party in 2000 at the Metreon also bombed. The media hype around the Y2K New Year's kept people from going out, said Bean. While he spent \$320,000 – \$100,000 of which went to rent out the Metreon – the high price of tickets kept him from losing his shirt, as 2,000 people did show at the party.

"We barely broke even," he said. "It wasn't the prices, it was the media-induced fear of at the stroke of midnight there would be technological pandemonium. That's what did it; it still sort of pisses me off."

While no longer the promoter for them, Bean lists Gay Days at Waterworld in Concord and at Paramount's Great America in Santa Clara as two of his greatest achievements. The events not only cater to his dance club set but also bring out gay youth who otherwise would be too young to attend his parties.

"They're the most successful

things I have ever done," he said. "I have a very soft spot in my heart or psyche for youth and remembering when I was young how much fun I had exploring nightlife."

Once again Bean is turning his attention to gay youth with his five-month old party The Crib. Replacing the 18-and-over Thursday night party Faith at 715 Harrison, the weekly party once again is proving Bean has the pulse of where the city's nightlife is headed.

"As House music blew up in the 1990s, now it is all about hip-hop," said Bean. "The skater, snowboarder and retro 1980s thing is also blowing up. I am really excited about it."

So it comes as no surprise that Bean will be heading to the slopes of Heavenly Ski Resort at Lake Tahoe this winter to oversee the debut of his first ski-themed party called Ascent the first weekend of March. Sponsored by the Nevada Gaming Commission, Bean has teamed up with the local gay community in the Sierra to tap into the emerging market for gay ski weeks.

Closer to home Bean predicts the weekly big gay dance parties are slowly becoming a thing of the past.

"People are responding to big special events, they just don't want to go out every single weekend. There has been a major swing, the younger 20-somethings who are going out want hip-hop and want alcohol," he said. "There is no question the new gay generation is much more into hip-hop, electro pop, and alcohol. As represented by the success of Metropolis Halloween [where 1,700 tickets were sold] I am very excited about continuing to throw large scale periodic mega-events, whether we call them circuit parties or just dance nights."

All weekend passes for Bean's Colossus New Year's weekend cost \$100, while tickets for the individual five parties cost \$40 in advance or \$50 at the door. Tickets can be bought in the Castro at Body, The Barking Frog, Gold's Gym or Always Tan. For more information visit www.guspresents.com. ▼

something."

Under consideration is the possibility of tearing down the existing building or construction of a second wing in order to create space for the historical society's archives as well as a research center and exhibition space. The idea is to create a gay cultural and tourist destination in the Castro as well as to foster better synergy between the work of the library and the society.

"We need more culture in the neighborhood," said District 8 Supervisor Bevan Dufty, a proponent of the proposal. "People come from around the world. They see us as a mecca but there is no place to see our history. The historical society is at a crossroads. There is a lot of competi-

tion for resources and they have not gotten their fair share. In 18 months they need to make a decision."

"This is too important an opportunity not to explore the potential," added Dufty, who won the backing of his board colleagues last month to pursue talks on the project.

A decision needs to be made within the next five months on whether the project, expected to cost up to \$15 million, is viable. While no architectural plans have been drawn up, initial talk has focused on building a brand new, two-story building with up to 20,000 square feet of space. A proposal is expected to be presented to the Library Commission sometime in January. ▼

Benjamin (Jeremie Elkaim). Swimming competition is woven smoothly into the eventually redeeming story line.

Stocking stuffers

Honorable mention in the slightly gay/lesbian category should go to *Kansas City Bombers*, the roller derby classic starring Raquel Welch, and *Slapshot*, the ice hockey classic comedy starring Paul Newman (still hot), and strip-teasing-on-ice Michael Ontkean (especially hot).

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Jim Provenzano is the author of the novels *PINS* and *Monkey Suits*. Read more sports columns at www.sportscomplex.org.

LEGAL NOTICES

CITY AND COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO



NOTICE OF AVAILABILITY OF REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP)

The Mayor's Office of Community Development and Mayor's Office of Housing are pleased to announce the availability of the Request for Proposals (RFP) for the 2005-06 Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) and Emergency Shelter Grant (ESG) programs. The RFP will be available only online beginning December 15, 2004. Please visit our web site at www.sfgov.org/mood under "Funding Info" section for more details.

REQUEST FOR BIDS

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The San Francisco Housing Authority will receive sealed bids for Exterior Painting and Repairs at Robert Pitts, CAL 43.

On Tuesday December 7, 2004, at 10:00 AM, a site inspection will be held at the Housing Development. Prospective bidders will meet in front of the Property Managers Office at 1150 Scott Street, San Francisco.

Responses are due 2:00 P.M. on Tuesday, December 28, 2004. The IFB document is available at the Authority's office at 1815 Egbert Avenue, San Francisco. A processing fee of \$50.00 (non-refundable) will be required for each set of documents. All payments must be in the form of Certified Check, Cashier's Check, or Company Check payable to the San Francisco Housing Authority. Cash or personal checks are not acceptable. Contact Ms. Brenda Moore, at (415) 715-3170, e-mail moorebr@sfgov.org.

VACANCY NOTICE

Pursuant to the provisions of Section 54974, California Government Code, notice is hereby given of the following unscheduled vacancies. Interested persons may obtain an application from the Board of Supervisors web site at www.sfgov.org/site/uploads/dfs/bdsuprvr/Vacancy_Notice/Vacancy_app.pdf or from the Clerk of the Rules Committee, 1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place, Room 244, San Francisco, CA 94102-4689. Completed applications should be submitted to the Clerk of the Board. All applicants must be residents of San Francisco, unless otherwise stated. Additional information may be obtained by accessing the City's web site: www.sfgov.org/bdsuprvr

Please Note: Depending upon the posting date, some vacancies may have already been filled. To determine if vacancies for this Board/Committee/Commission or Task Force are still available please call the Rules Committee Clerk at 554-5184.

Citizens' General Obligation Bond Oversight Committee

Vacant seat, succeeding Deidre Von Rock-Ricci, term expired, seat 1, must be active in a business organization representing the business community located within the City, for a two-year term ending November 21, 2006.

Vacant seat, succeeding William Wong, term expired, seat 2, must be active in labor organizations, for a two-year term ending November 21, 2006.

Vacant seat, succeeding John Hentz, term expired, seat 3, must be active in a community organization, for a two-year term ending November 21, 2006.

Public Utilities Citizens' Advisory Committee

Vacant Seat, new appointment, seat 5, must be a resident of the Supervisorial District 5, appointed by the district 5 Supervisor, and have one or more of the following qualifications: represent a community, business, environmental, or environmental justice organization or have knowledge, skill or experience in a field related to public utilities, environmental justice or environmental science, for a new four-year term to be determined.

Vacant Seat, new appointment, seat 12, must be a resident of the City and County of San Francisco, shall be appointed by the President of the Board of Supervisors, and represent a small business, for a new four-year term to be determined.

STATEMENT FILE A-0280196-00

The following person(s) are doing business as: Viking Giant Sub 2906 Diamond Street, San Francisco, Ca. 94131. This business is conducted by an individual, signed John Ahau Lan. The registrant(s) commenced to transact business under the above listed fictitious business name or names on 11/22/04. The statement was filed with the City and County of San Francisco, Ca. on 11/22/04. NOV. 25, DEC. 2,9,16 2004

STATEMENT FILE A-0280795-00

The following person(s) are doing business as: GLBTHS, GLBT Historical Society, 657 Mission Street #300 San Francisco, Ca. 94105. This business is conducted by a corporation, signed Jacob Richards. The registrant(s) commenced to transact business under the above listed fictitious business name or names on 09/2002. The statement was filed with the City and County of San Francisco, Ca. on 11/16/04. NOV. 25, DEC. 2,9,16 2004

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IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA IN AND FOR THE COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO FILE # CNC 04541638

In the matter of the application of Theodore Gabriel for change of name. The application of Theodore Gabriel for change of name having been filed in Court, and it appearing from said application that Theodore Gabriel has filed an application proposing that his/her name be changed to Theodore Gabriel Tasoulas. Now therefore, it is hereby ordered, that all persons interested in said matter do appear before this Court in Department 218 on the 13th day of January, 2004 at 9:00 am of said day to show cause why the application for change of name should not be granted. DEC. 2,9,16,23, 2004

STATEMENT FILE A-0280989-00

The following person(s) are doing business as: El Rincon, 2700 16th Street, San Francisco, Ca. 94103. This business is conducted by a corporation, signed V.C. Yadav. The registrant(s) commenced to transact business under the above listed fictitious business name or names on 11/24/04. The statement was filed with the City and County of San Francisco, Ca. on 11/24/04. DEC. 2,9,16,23, 2004

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Sports Complex

◀ previous page

tive mix of documentary and fiction.

You'll Get Over It (Director: Fabrice Cazeneuve, 2002, France). In this drama that includes lots of hunky swimmers and the realistically frustrating experience of being outed on a high school team, a familiar story is given an unusual twist when Vincent (Julien Baumgartner) develops a tense friendship with antijock

Benjamin (Jeremie Elkaim). Swimming competition is woven smoothly into the eventually redeeming story line.

Stocking stuffers

Honorable mention in the slightly gay/lesbian category should go to *Kansas City Bombers*, the roller derby classic starring Raquel Welch, and *Slapshot*, the ice hockey classic comedy starring Paul Newman (still hot), and strip-teasing-on-ice Michael Ontkean (especially hot).

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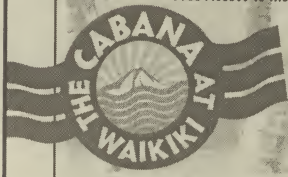
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LEGAL NOTICES

STATEMENT FILE A-0281023-00

The following person(s) are doing business as: J.P. Limos, 2794 40th Ave., San Francisco, Ca. 94116. This business is conducted by an individual, signed Jason Peterson. The registrant(s) commenced to transact business under the above listed fictitious business name or names on 11/29/04. The statement was filed with the City and County of San Francisco, Ca. on 11/29/04.
DEC. 2, 9, 16, 23, 2004

STATEMENT FILE A-0280899-00

The following person(s) are doing business as: Butchboy Studios LLC, 596 46th Ave., San Francisco, Ca. 94112. This business is conducted by a limited liability company, signed Joel Hoyer. The registrant(s) commenced to transact business under the above listed fictitious business name or names on 11/22/04. The statement was filed with the City and County of San Francisco, Ca. on 11/22/04.
DEC. 2, 9, 16, 23, 2004

STATEMENT FILE A-0280945-00

The following person(s) are doing business as: T&G Homecare Services, 101 Farallones Street, San Francisco, Ca. 94112. This business is conducted by a general partnership, signed George Servin. The registrant(s) commenced to transact business under the above listed fictitious business name or names on NA. The statement was filed with the City and County of San Francisco, Ca. on 11/23/04.
DEC. 2, 9, 16, 23, 2004

STATEMENT FILE A-0280602-00

The following person(s) are doing business as: HBR Records, 1146 Buchanan Street, San Francisco, Ca. 94115. This business is conducted by an individual, signed Ramon Sapp. The registrant(s) commenced to transact business under the above listed fictitious business name or names on 11/01/04. The statement was filed with the City and County of San Francisco, Ca. on 11/08/04.
DEC. 2, 9, 16, 23, 2004

STATEMENT FILE A-0280969-00

The following person(s) are doing business as: Gold-Diggers (Discount Clothing) 1276 Market Street, San Francisco, Ca. 94102. This business is conducted by an individual, signed Daniel Osunde. The registrant(s) commenced to transact business under the above listed fictitious business name or names on NA. The statement was filed with the City and County of San Francisco, Ca. on 11/23/04.
DEC. 2, 9, 16, 23, 2004

STATEMENT FILE A-0280944-00

The following person(s) are doing business as: Pettit Import/Export, 950 Noe Street, San Francisco, Ca. 94114. This business is conducted by an individual, signed John LePettit. The registrant(s) commenced to transact business under the above listed fictitious business name or names on NA. The statement was filed with the City and County of San Francisco, Ca. on 11/23/04.
DEC. 2, 9, 16, 23, 2004

STATEMENT FILE A-0281235-00

The following person(s) are doing business as: No Mercy Inc, 155 12th Street San Francisco, Ca. 94103. This business is conducted by an individual, signed Jason Peterson. The registrant(s) commenced to transact business under the above listed fictitious business name or names on 12/06/04. The statement was filed with the City and County of San Francisco, Ca. on 12/06/04.
DEC. 9, 16, 23, 30 2004

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LEGAL NOTICES

STATEMENT FILE A-0281072-00

The following person(s) are doing business as: Sunset Plumbing, 1858 45th Ave. San Francisco, Ca. 94122. This business is conducted by an individual, signed Yehuda Golani. The registrant(s) commenced to transact business under the above listed fictitious business name or names on 03/01/95. The statement was filed with the City and County of San Francisco, Ca. on 12/01/04.
DEC. 9, 16, 23, 30 2004

STATEMENT FILE A-0280886-00

The following person(s) are doing business as: Bernal Bike, 1637 Florida Street, San Francisco, Ca. 94110. This business is conducted by an individual, signed Henry F. Kroyer. The registrant(s) commenced to transact business under the above listed fictitious business name or names on 11/20/04. The statement was filed with the City and County of San Francisco, Ca. on 11/19/04.
DEC. 16, 23, 30, JAN. 6, 2004

STATEMENT FILE A-0281284-00

The following person(s) are doing business as: Lolo Cup, 2527 San Bruno Ave., San Francisco, Ca. 94134. This business is conducted by a corporation, signed James Hin. The registrant(s) commenced to transact business under the above listed fictitious business name or names on 12/01/04. The statement was filed with the City and County of San Francisco, Ca. on 12/08/04.
DEC. 16, 23, 30, JAN. 6, 2004

STATEMENT FILE A-0281215-00

The following person(s) are doing business as: Photos By Maurice, 556 Arlington Street, San Francisco, Ca. 94112. This business is conducted by an individual, signed Maurice Magnant. The registrant(s) commenced to transact business under the above listed fictitious business name or names on 12/06/04. The statement was filed with the City and County of San Francisco, Ca. on 12/08/04.
DEC. 16, 23, 30, JAN. 6, 2004

NOTICE OF APPLICATION FOR CHANGE IN OWNERSHIP OF ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE LICENSE

To whom it may concern: The Name of the Applicant(s) is/are: Zekis Bar Inc. The applicants listed above are applying to the Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control at 185 Berry Street, Suite #5600 San Francisco, Ca. 94107, to sell alcoholic beverages at: 1319 California Street, San Francisco, Ca. 94109. Type of License applied for: 48-ON-SALE GENERAL PUBLIC PREMISES
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Doing her bit for beautiful freakdom
Pam Tent's 'Midnight at the Palace: My
Life as a Fabulous Cockette' reviewed.
page 31

Howard's end
L. DiCaprio as H. Hughes
in Scorsese's 'The Aviator.'
page 29



20th-century eye
'Twentieth Century Fox:
Inside the Photo Archive.'
page 30



ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

BAY AREA REPORTER

Vol. 34 • No. 51 • 16 December 2004

Men behaving badly

Gael Garcia Bernal stars in Pedro Almodovar's latest masterpiece

by David Lamble



A scene from *Bad Education*

His mother just being the best gay in the world. In the magazine, the 1990s talk shows and a guide, this dainty, bearded man with jet-black hair, a nose ring and a smile that may make him a more popular figure than any other in the world. Born to a poor family in the sprawling city of Guadalajara, less than 200 miles from Mexico's Pacific coast, Gael Garcia Bernal met his best friend when both were infants. Years later, a torrid bout of same-sex kissing between the two would permeate a film elevating both young men to international star status. He played the role of the star's

sidekick in a TV soap at age 12, and has completed close to 20 feature films, yet he claims not to have taken acting all that seriously until his late teens, when he got a chance to train at a prestigious London drama school.

Barely five days past his 26th birthday, on an exhausting press junket flogging two great films at once, Gael Garcia Bernal is wolfing down a mid-day snack when this reporter has the nerve to ask him just what he's got against the Catholic Church. A young man who is never at a loss for words — in four languages, no less — Bernal neatly turns the

question into an autopsy of our recent election. At last, to the director of his breakout hit film, *Y Tu Mama Tambien*, he explains how many people misunderstand his country.

As Alfonso Cuarón calls it, Mexico might be considered a conservative country. I don't think it is, I mean, the people, we are not conservative, but the institutions might be conservative. In the United States, they're not conservative, they're Puritan, the institutions and the corporations are completely Puritan. The elections were won by funda-

page 36 ►

Child star of the Golden Age

Margaret O'Brien remembers the old days

by Tavo Amador



Judy Garland and Elizabeth Taylor played her older sisters. She met Joan Fontaine's *Jane Eyre* and Orson Welles' Mr. Rochester. In 1944-45, she was one of Hollywood's top 10 box-office stars. On Friday, December 17, Margaret O'Brien will appear at the Castro Theatre for Marc Huestis' *A Judy Garland Christmas* and a special showing of *Meet Me in St. Louis* ('44).

During a recent telephone conversation, O'Brien (b. '37) explained, "I started as a child model, accidentally. A photographer for *The Saturday Evening Post* wanted my dog on the cover, and used me as well." Show business was in her blood, however. Her mother was a Spanish dancer. "She and my aunt worked with Eduardo Cansino. His daughter, Margarita, became Rita Hayworth."

She had a bit in the Garland-Mickey Rooney vehicle *Babes on Broadway* ('41). MGM wanted a child for *Journey for Margaret* ('42), about the London blitz. An executive spotted the *Post* cover, and she tested. Blessed with a photographic memory and coached by her

mother, she got the lead, and changed her first name from Maxine to Margaret. The film was a hit, and the studio rushed her into several more movies, mostly programmers, but in '44, she was in three successes: *Jane Eyre*, *The Canterville Ghost* with Charles Laughton, and *St. Louis*, directed by Vincente Minnelli, in which O'Brien acts with astonishing naturalness.

Mr. Minnelli "didn't tell me my dog had died, to get me to cry," she says, even though that's what he wrote in his memoirs, *I Remember It Well*. "My mother wouldn't have allowed it, nor would Judy [Garland]."

O'Brien and the much older June Allyson had a friendly rivalry about who was best at crying on cue. "Mother took me aside and said, 'I'd better ask the makeup man to put some tears on you. You know, June is such a fine actress, she'd cry right away.' Well, that was all I needed to hear. When we resumed filming, I cried immediately."

Star behavior

Working with Garland was "wonderful. She was the nicest person. Very protective. When we had our duet, I was nervous — I could dance, but not sing. She

page 33 ►

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The more things change

Ellen, Portia change lesbians & dance

by Roberto Friedman

Lesbians are apparently learning how to do the old Hollywood Shuffle, just like the old-boy moguls have been doing it for ages. Daytime TV's most beloved lesbian, **Ellen DeGeneres**, who survived a long-time relationship with and high-profile break-up from the mercurial movie star **Anne Heche**, has gone and tossed her girlfriend of four years' standing, photographer-director **Alexandra Hedison**, overboard, and proceeded to "shack up" [Page Six] with glam TV actress **Portia de Rossi**.

De Rossi herself is fresh from dumping her own longtime girlfriend, **Francesca Gregorini**, who also happens to be the stepdaughter of geriatric drummer **Ringo Starr**. Six lesbian degrees of **Yoko Ono**!

Sometimes all of life can play out like a peep show. Last weekend's SF run of Canadian experimental filmmaker **Guy Maddin's** *Cowards Bend the Knee* ('03) brought Out There out olde Haight way, to the Red Vic Movie House. *Cowards* played a shorts bill with *The Phantom Museum* by **The Brothers Quay** ('03), a close encounter with the collection of creepy medical curiosities compiled by one **Sir Henry Wellcome**.

Earlier this year, we'd treated ourselves to repeat viewings of bigger-budget Maddin *The Saddest Music in the World* ('04) and the frozen popscicle of *Careful* ('93), so we were mad for more Maddin. *Cowards*, adapted from a 10-part peep-show installation, finds him back working in short format. The auteur is the son of a hockey announcer and a beautician, which maybe explains a lot, because pucks and sticks count for a lot in this flick.

That leaves three more Maddin shorts currently available in DVD



The Eugene Onegin waltz under *The Phantom of the Opera* chandelier?

left for us to see: *Sombra Dolorosa*, *A Trip to the Ophanage*, and *Sissy Boy Slap Party* — "as if **Kenneth Anger's** homoerotic *Fireworks* had been made for *The Three Stooges*" [Village Voice].

The Chronicle Explains It All for You: From the SF daily's review of gay Spanish comedy *Bear Cub*: "Pedro happens to be gay, HIV-positive, and part of a subculture of gay men who call themselves bears because they let their body hair grow au naturel and aren't obsessed with dieting or keeping toned."

Oh, that's what that's all about. Wait, wasn't there something about being lazy, too, or is that just a subset of a subculture? Calling Dear *Chronicle* Support Lady!

O! Onegin

Last Thursday night's performance of the San Francisco Opera's *Eugene Onegin* was that rare, delicious experience called an auspicious debut, as baritone **Lucas Meacham**, a current Adler Fellow with SF Opera, sang the title role with confidence and aplomb. He replaced **Russell Braun**, who is recovering from a back injury, maybe from tripping over the hundreds of pairs of shoes in Tatyana's boudoir in this production's manic final scene.

Meacham, a 2003 Merola Program graduate, made his SF Opera debut last season as the Third Student from Wittenberg in *Doktor Faust*, and appeared earlier this season as Novice's Friend/Sailor in *Billy Budd*. He dispatched Onegin with verve and bravado, to well-deserved bravos. Also, Out There thought his outfit was *my* fetching, right down to the glove-leather boots.

As you've already read in these pages, **Elena Prokina** as Tatyana, **Allyson McHardy** as Olga, and **Piotr Beczala** as Lensky were no slouches. Either they were all stunning, or Out There was stunned to begin with. But we were most impressed by Meacham's debut. If only the dashing young Onegin weren't such a cad. Well, maybe he can't help it, can he? Oops sorry, for a minute there, we thought we were in therapy.

Steamy weather

We're just asking: Why would the Kinsey Sicks' **Rachel** want to plug her show in a daily gossip column by trumpeting about how many sexually-transmitted diseases she's contracted? And who is the glamorous "fellow celebrity

gust" on KRON who was trying to one-up her in the STD sweepstakes?

What would former exec. director of the Gay and Lesbian Medical Association **Ben Schatz** think of the whole competition?



Rachel, no stranger to STD row?

We're just asking, too: Why is a "celebrities" column for a local, free, wire-service-filled daily, made up of all sorts of boldface p.r. piffle from the previous day's Internets, entitled, "Scoops"? Isn't a scoop what they had the day before, on the Internets? Yesterday: feels so far away.

On the other hand, sometimes rehashing the tabs can be downright salutary. Last week, the NY *Daily News*' "Lowdown" column was all twitter about rampant man-on-man action going on at NYC's Reebok Sports Club/NY. Seems there have been complaints about sexual activity in the men's showers, Jacuzzi, sauna and steamroom. Management seems to have taken a full headcount.

Sports Club Company president **Phil Swain** told the *News* he had to deploy undercover (and undertowel!) security personnel in the steamy wet basement downstairs from the men's lockers. "We've put undercover people in the wet areas, kind of like a sting operation." We love it when he talks dirty! "And, frankly, a couple of people have been caught, and their memberships have been terminated." Ouch!

Health-club members have complained about "a variety of seamy incidents in recent weeks involving guys getting it on with guys." Wait, isn't that the name of a personals column?

"On Sunday, one club member said, two men sitting together in the Jacuzzi 'leered at' a famous television personality as he

page 41 ►

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THE NEW CONSERVATORY THEATRE CENTER



MUSIC

Leading the band in a new 'Nutcracker'

San Francisco Ballet music director Andrew Mogrelia in the pit

by Stephanie von Buchau

If the San Francisco Ballet hadn't been so strong in artistic talent and administrative smarts 14 years into its current run under Helgi Tomasson's leadership, it is conceivable that the unexpected death of longtime music director Denis de Coteau in 1999 could have marred all that Tomasson had accomplished since taking over the troubled company in 1985.

Under Michael Smuin, de Coteau was able to keep his orchestra in fine tune, but not to exercise much control over musical taste. Under Tomasson, he had a like-minded partner in the search for musical excellence, something one rarely encounters in a ballet company. For nearly five years after de Coteau resigned because

of poor health, SFB experimented with a number of conductors. This is a long time to go without a musical anchor, but Tomasson told me on more than one occasion that he was prepared to wait for the right person.

The right person was Andrew Mogrelia, an Anglo-Indian born in Wales who guested with SFB during the 2003 repertory season, before being named music director in May of last year. Mogrelia — the name is Parsi, not Italian — is soft-spoken, even a little shy until you get onto his favorite subject, music. He came to SFB with a strong dance background, having conducted at English National Ballet, Dutch National Ballet, Birmingham Royal Ballet and various Australian dance companies. He also led the CD performance of Delibes' *Sylvia* (on Naxos) before conducting the spectacular



Artistic serendipity at the helm.

Mark Morris production of that ballet here this spring.

Sylvia was wonderfully conducted, but I was already sold on Mogrelia after his *Nutcracker* performances last Christmas. Tchaikovsky, in case you don't remember, was Denis de Coteau's strong suit. Part of the reason that Tomasson's productions of the two supreme Tchaikovsky ballets — *Swan Lake* and *Sleeping Beauty* — were so successful is because de Coteau and his orchestra could play them with the grandeur and magic those fabulous scores require. Created in 1975 by de Coteau as the Performing Arts Orchestra, the now-49-member San Francisco Ballet Orchestra is one of the premiere pit bands in world

dance.

De Coteau's *Nutcracker* was equally splendid. None of the intervening conductors, each of whom had his or her own virtues, could get anywhere near that level of majesty. Yet in Mogrelia's *Nutcracker*, we could revel in the thrilling rising of the tree, the passionate snow scene, the colorful character dances, the sweeping "Waltz of the Flowers" and the purely classical grand pas de deux. So it is artistic serendipity that

Mogrelia will be at the helm of SFB's glamorous new *Nutcracker* production, debuting on December 17.

Musical history

The Mogrelia family moved "all over the center of England" when he was a child. Though his parents weren't particularly musical, Andrew asked for and got a piano at age nine. "It was like being shot out of a cannon. I knew

page 39 ►

Bell well-rung

by Philip Campbell

Let's face facts. There just aren't that many hotties in classical music. And if anyone tries to tell you that sex doesn't sell, even in that exalted arena, they haven't been following trends in advertising.

Thankfully, talent and technique still seem to be the most alluring traits for a serious young musician, but for every Deborah Voigt or Yo-Yo Ma, there are the Opera Babes and Ofra Harnoy.

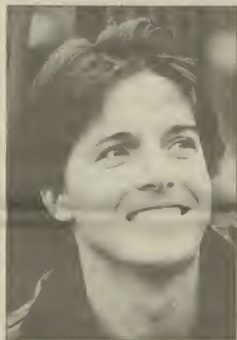
When ability and looks intersect, however, who can blame a gifted artist if they quickly attract a cult following? Baritone Nathan Gunn left them panting at the San Francisco Opera recently when he unleashed his gleaming voice and bared his pumped-up chest. Violinist Anne-Sophie Mutter regularly displays her impressive cleavage in strapless evening gowns, but she also plays Beethoven like some goddess incarnation of Jascha Heifitz.

Ever since his San Francisco Symphony debut in 1991, young violinist Joshua Bell has earned praise from critics and subscribers alike while also assuring sold-out houses with an ever-growing number of groupies. His wholesome Midwestern physique and sensitive features add irresistibly to his stage presence. Gratefully, like Gunn and Mutter, he can also deliver the goods.

Teaming with another regular guest artist, conductor Roberto Abbado, at Davies Hall last week, Bell offered a highly individual interpretation of the great Tchaikovsky Violin Concerto in D Major.

Interpretation might be too strong a word, for he really rushed the outer movements off their feet with a dazzling display of personal agility. To his credit, there was nary a missed or wrong note, but the sheer quickness of the performance robbed it of any sense of personality.

Only in the appealing slow movement did Bell show any real depth of emotion. It hardly mattered to the enthusiastic crowd. They were champing at the bit to give their hero a standing ovation. It almost happened after the first movement, when the ferocious



Stage presence, goods delivered.

applause seemed to indicate that many in the crowd thought the piece was already over.

There is little point in expressing disappointment at the overall effect of the rendition. It was a young man's vision, all flash and testosterone. Bell has shown his understanding and tender emotions in the past with a wonderfully memorable Samuel Barber Violin Concerto. We know he can dig deeper, but if he wanted to show off a little this time, what the heck?

Bell's reception and powerhouse performance might have daunted maestro Abbado, but he certainly betrayed no fear. His opening selection, Busoni's grave and meditative "Berceuse Elegiaque," proved an offbeat, stately introduction that couldn't have contrasted better with the Concerto.

After intermission, Abbado flexed his own muscles with French composer Pascal Dusapin's brief and rather overpowering "Extenso." The Tchaikovsky fans were dismayed, but SFS audiences are a game lot, and they responded politely. I thought it was exciting and very well-played, sort of an ornery take on John Adams' "Short Ride in a Fast Machine."

The evening ended with a glittering account of the Suite No. 2 from Ravel's *Daphnis et Chloe*. The intelligent conductor kept the orchestra on a tight leash, but he didn't stint on the vivid Technicolor aspects of the sensuous score, and the effect was thrilling. As a point of interest: Abbado is pretty easy on the eyes, too. ▼

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'Once Upon a Mattress'

by Richard Dodds

Lea DeLaria has taken a Carol Burnett role and turned it into a Martha Raye role. There's a considerable difference between a vulnerable human hiding in a clown's persona and an anything-for-a-laugh clown who skimps on the human part.

DeLaria is starring in *Once Upon a Mattress* for 42nd Street Moon, returning the multifaceted performer to the city where she got her start 25 years ago as a stand-up on the budding lesbian and gay comedy scene. In recent years, DeLaria has found mainstream success on the New York stage, most notably in the Nancy Walker role in the revival of *On the Town*. It's a treat to have her back in SF in a book musical.

But her performance as Winnifred the Woebegone, a bumpkin storybook princess from a swampy kingdom, is mostly a collection of physical shtick and heavy-duty mugging, with a few ad-libs (genuine and otherwise) thrown in. All this can draw laughter, but it doesn't have much heart. *Once Upon a Mattress* is a musical that needs at least a little heart mixed in with its foolishness.

On the musical front, DeLaria shows off a Merman-like voice as she tears into such novelty songs as "Shy" and "The Swamps of

Home," before going nightclub in a pull-out-the-stops rendition of the torchy "Happily Ever After." The other songs in the Mary Rodgers-Marshall Barer score, spread out among the other characters, don't make much impact at the Eureka Theatre.

While 42nd Street Moon, known mainly for its staged-concert revivals of seldom-seen musicals, sought out DeLaria to star in a musical of her choosing, it has surrounded her with the not-quite-ready-for-primetime production that is too often typical for this troupe. Wayne Bryan's direction is forced and often frantically obvious, and the local cast seldom emerges as more than just fair.

On the plus side, Charlie Levy displays a warm and appealing voice as the narrator-minstrel. On the down side, Rudy Guerrero lacks the comic persona for Prince Dauntless, a mama's boy whose lack of comedic honesty here takes a serious toll on the production.

It's unfortunate that 42nd Street Moon couldn't crank up the quality for this high-profile production. It's not quite woebegone, but it's circling the area. ▼

Once Upon a Mattress will run at the Eureka Theatre through Jan. 2. Tickets are \$17-\$30. Call 978-2787 or go to 42ndstreetmoon.org.

Lea DeLaria as Winnifred the Woebegone in 42nd Street Moon's production of *Once Upon a Mattress*.

High priestess of jazz

Patricia Barber, live in Paris, out on CD

by Tim Pfaff

Patricia Barber is increasingly dividing her audience. I don't mean just the messy masses that make up her fan base, which divides into something like the red and blue states (and, in both camps, the altered states). I mean people like me, people who don't need all the fingers of one hand to count the things they'd rather do than listen to Barber make music. People she makes want to scream, alternately in ecstasy and frustration.

Her recent gig at Yoshi's nearly made me pop for a transoceanic flight. As a kind of consolation

prize, there's her new CD, *Patricia Barber Live: A Fortnight in France* (Blue Note). But the press I've seen tells me I'm not alone in finding its consolations mixed. Beating last April in Paris by the titular fortnight, the performances leave no doubt that the lesbian singer-songwriter-pianist — for my money, the best in the business — continues growing musically with an almost feral tenacity. The best tracks are among her best ever. But most of those aren't her own songs, which continue forging the singular path she staked out as her own in her last CD, *Verses*.

In the new CD, the High Priestess of Wretched Romance leads with her "Gotcha," a song whose very title makes you tense up if you know where this castrating Cassandra prowls. Its curdling opening chords set the stage for six-minute terrorizing (with, in her own crunched lyrics, "a taste for revenge") of an ex for whom you almost start to feel pity. The taunting refrain, "Are you wide, wide awake?" (from a woman who admits to her own "sleep issues") is chilling.

That's the thing about her new material. For all her craft, the impression it leaves is less musical than spectral. These are tough songs in every sense of the word. They don't even begin to stick in the memory until the third or fourth hearing, in no small part because you don't really want them to. This keenest of intelligences gives them their hard births, and they spring not from the heart or soul but the mind of a woman of godlike powers.

Cover story

Her so-called "covers," on the other hand, bore their way through convention and lodge in the memory indelibly. After a single hearing, I could recall the whole of her potent, seven-minute traversal of "Norwegian Wood," whose opening words, had John Lennon not written them, could pass as pure Barber: "I once had a girl/or should I say/she once had me."

Any sentimentality you may have about the Beatles' song is pretty well knocked out of your head by the time Barber and her superb band — guitarist Neal Alger, bassist Michael Arnpol, and drummer Eric Montzma — have sliced it up with two of the wildest, most imaginative breaks on the disc. They leave it, and you, shivering with the chill of it all.

Barber, who plays barefoot, treads more softly through "Laura" and "Call Me." But she's on more familiar ground with "Blue Prelude." Any song with



Deep musical instincts, finely honed.

lyrics like "What is love but a prelude to sorrow, with a heartbreak ahead for your goal?" is sure to bring out the best in Barber, who doesn't disappoint, with the best singing on the disc. The somber, smoky, disconsolate voice breaks free, midway, into one of her best riffs, then tapers off into a "Good-bye" so drained of expression it approaches bald speech.

Still, it's Barber's own "White-world" that gives me the heebie-jeebies. The first peek at her next project (undertaken on a Guggenheim, and based on her study of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*), it's the Oedipus episode. Its politics are timely — its protagonist identifies himself as "a First World Oedipus, and Mother Earth is down on her knees" — and clearly go down like oysters with her French audience. But the tireless, then tiresome wordplay — and reference to "deconstructionist ease" — all but suppress the music.

With tracks like the purely instrumental "Witchcraft" leaving no doubt that Barber has some of the deepest musical instincts and most finely honed chops on the block, it's worrisome to think what a terrible waste of supernal music-making a great mind might be.

Don't get me wrong. I've got no gripes with brazenly intellectual content in music of any kind. The advanced numerology and cloaked symbolism in Bach and Berg don't bring their music down. As for Barber's, it all goes down better with each hearing. But I couldn't help noticing that the French audience's clap-o-meter was a fairly consistent match with my own enthusiasm for the material. Encore the witchcraft, please. ▼

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Leonardo DiCaprio as 'The Aviator'

by David Lambie

In the first act of *The Aviator*, as the 22-year-old Howard Hughes (Leonardo DiCaprio) struggles to re-shoot *Hell's Angels*, his budget-busting tribute to WWI flying aces, a cranky meteorologist lectures the boy wonder who is waiting for just the right cloud formation before he shoots his aerial ballet. "Cumulus clouds that act and look like giant breasts full of milk cannot be guaranteed."

In one fell swoop, we are introduced to the reigning obsessions of Hughes' life: the movies, fast planes, tits and milk. We're off to the races.

Few have ever sorted fact from hokum in the Hughes legend, so it's no knock against director Martin Scorsese, screenwriter John Logan and DiCaprio to say that *The Aviator* is several movies in one. Many will find the first hour, spanning Hughes' obsession with *Hell's Angels* and his messy affair with Katharine Hepburn (Cate Blanchett), to be the film's most amusing, sexy and awe-inspiring part.

This is a movie so full of marvelous performances and entertaining set-pieces that it's hard to choose, but I will. My favorite moment is the captivating sequence where Scorsese (with a nifty assist from editor Thelma Schoonmaker) captures the spectacle of Hughes virtually taken hostage for a weekend with Hepburn's wealthy, wacky collection of blue-blood misfits. You don't have to know anything about Hughes or Hepburn to appreciate the trainwreck when the man of few words and many phobias endures a dinner table of pushy aristocrats, all the while a large, germ-bearing canine chews on the bashful billionaire's foot as he confronts Hepburn's imperious mother. "We don't care about money here, Mr. Hughes." "That's because you've always had it."

Blanchett's Hepburn is an as-tute rendering. She dares to do the accent and those ever-so-slightly



DiCaprio has the soul of an actor who plays well with others.

mannish touches that must have had Hughes wondering who already possessed the pants in this union. At the end of the slapstick weekend, Cate as Kate denounces her whole silly clan with the very Hepburnesque line, "You're a fine group of bullies!"

Pretty baby

DiCaprio may finally have given the performance that will convince the naysayers to look beyond his girlishly pretty face to the soul of an actor who plays well with others. All of the star-turn cameos and supporting players (the ubiquitous Jude Law as the nightclub-brawling Errol Flynn; gay singer Rufus Wainwright as a '40s Coconut Grove crooner) are aided by DiCaprio's ability both to take charge of a scene, and to back off and yield the spotlight to others.

The movie does a fine job not only of explaining a brilliantly flawed man (his own worst enemy), but also of giving some forgotten lessons in how America got to be the place we love to hate.

The filmmakers are especially shrewd in their take on the obsessive/compulsive disorder that would eventually reduce Hughes to a bearded recluse drinking his own urine. DiCaprio has figured out how to spoon out just enough of the bitter truth to keep the movie honest without making us want to barf into our popcorn. The sight of a paranoid Hughes unable to leave a hotel men's room due to his fear of turning the germ-infested doorknob is a window into madness.

In addition to his numerous patents for experimental airplanes, Hughes is also the father of the X-rated movie. There's a hilarious sequence depicting producer Hughes' efforts to get an exhibition license for *The Outlaw*, despite Jane Russell's overflowing pushup bra. A worried aide quizzes Hughes before his showdown with the motion-picture censorship board. "Do you think they're going to let you put out a whole movie about tits?" "Sure. Who doesn't like tits?" *Opens Friday.* ▼

The right to die

Javier Bardem finds 'The Sea Inside'

by David Lambie

The Sea Inside boasts a career performance from Spanish heartthrob Javier Bardem as a man, totally paralyzed in a diving accident, who has been fighting for 30 years to end his life. The Spanish film, ably directed by Chilean Alejandro Amenabar, beats the bedpans out of its worthy 1981 American counterpart, *Whose Life Is It, Anyway?* Its main plot, involving assisted suicide, is augmented by two love stories and a complex family drama.

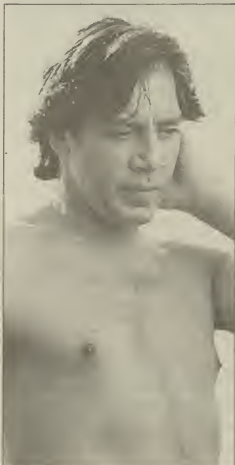
Alejandro shows us a man surrounded by his music, watching soccer games with his nephew, dreaming of the day of his accident, when a fateful rescue cheated him of a quick death. He's a man who dreams that he can jump out of bed and fly across the stark Galician countryside to his

real home, the sea.

Bardem, whose extraordinary portrait of exiled Cuban gay novelist Reynaldo Arenas (*Before Night Falls*, 2000) won him a sizable American fanbase, has been restored to his fashion-model-quality good looks, although he scoffs at such descriptions, insisting he doesn't view himself as especially attractive. Each day that he appeared on the set of *The Sea Inside* as a bald, 54-year old paraplegic confined to a bed with a view (if somebody remembers to turn him over) required five hours of makeup, eight to 10 hours in the bed, and then a return to his own bed. He jokes that the weight of this routine made him somewhat allergic to the whole idea of bedrest. "I wanted to learn to sleep upside-down like a bat."

Bardem admits that an odd dilemma of *The Sea Inside* was to

page 39 ►



Bardem, dreaming of taking flight

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On the Twentieth Century

Letting Fox be Fox in a collection of studio photo archives

by Glen Helfand

Twentieth Century Fox: Inside the Photo Archive; Harry N. Abrams, Inc., \$50

Doomsday prophecies aside, I must admit I had a peculiar Y2K worry: what would Twentieth Century Fox do when we entered the Twenty-First? I should have had faith in the idea that film is the medium of the 20th century — it emerged at its beginning and evolved into a form that is the foundation of the Information Age. So the film studio that produced such classics as *Butch Cassidy and the Sundance*

Kid, The Seven Year Itch, The Gang's All Here and *Valley of the Dolls* has kept its name and identity intact. It's only in its television and news division that things have changed to reflect the current neon zeitgeist.

It seems fitting then that the 20th Century Fox logo is an unshakable stack of architectonic text with its klieg-light beams — an image so astutely appropriated by Ed Ruscha in his equally iconic painting from the 1960s. At this point, a movie studio, in its classic sense, is a thing of history, and oddly, Fox is one of the few that has tended to its photo archives with much care. It's difficult to fathom how the editors of the hefty *Twentieth Century Fox: Inside the Photo Archive* managed to make selections from the millions of publicity shots, behind-the-scenes images and wardrobe and set tests, but the results are an engaging document that offers refreshing postmodern winks along with the pleasure of seeing different angles on classics. While you may be able to peg specific films, the photographs are for the most part unseen views — candid images of between-takes stars, off-handed moments and behind-the-scenes snaps that challenge our ideas of movie magic while indulging our unquenchable desires to see, say, Barbra testing a gown for *Hello Dolly!*

Hands down

The editors have arranged the book in a mixture of thematic juxtapositions and double-page spreads that make intuitive sense. Tyrone Power, for example, is seen lounging between takes of *In Old Chicago*, with bloody makeup running down his cheek. The photo faces a page in which a stubby Henry Fonda, in the '43 *Oxbow Incident*, strikes a surprisingly sexy pose with his hands seemingly about to unbuckle his jeans. In another, a production still of Sally Field in *Norma Rae*, in which the actress is surrounded by



hunky cameramen, faces a page in which former Catwoman Julie Newmar is seen in a beach moment from the '62 *Marriage Go Round*, in which she's got her own pack of even firmer guys in bathing suits serving possibly as her boytoy back-up dancers.

While Cindy Sherman revealed the iconography of moviemaking in her '70s photo series *Untitled Film Stills*, the images uncovered here have equal interest, particularly in the construction of female characterization. We see it in the photograph of ravishing Ava Gardner pinned beneath a formidable machine in *The Snows of Kilimanjaro* while the crew is visible in the background, and in the nearby shot of Olivia de Havilland in the melodramatic psychodrama *The Snake Pit*. The star is seen from above, being filmed on a hospital gurney. Mental illness a couple steps removed.

There are plenty of images of Liz Taylor (mostly from her dewy days as *Cleopatra*), of Marilyn Monroe, and of the shockingly beautiful Sharon Tate. There's a candid, topless bath-shot of Jayne Mansfield in *Will Success Spoil Rock Hunter?* Farrah Fawcett is seen wearing the titular character's gown from *Myra Breckinridge*, while Raquel Welch, between takes in her *One Million Years B.C.* fur bikini, sits in a director's chair next to a very '60s totebag.

On some level, books like this



Actor Tyrone Power is seen lounging between takes of *In Old Chicago*.

are like sampler boxes of chocolates, with some treats appealing to specific tastes more than others. Some will go for Ginger Rogers in ripped fishnets while others, Jane Russell with a punching bag in one hand and a highball in the other (*Gentleman Prefer Blondes*, of course). There's an off-hand moment from *The Rocky Horror Picture Show*, Bette Davis in an eye-patch in '68, Joan Crawford and Shirley MacLaine in *John Goldfarb, Please Come Home* ('65), and Shelley Winters in a costume test from *The Poseidon Adventure* (she's munching on a bon bon).

As you might surmise, movie queens outnumber handsome actors, but there are some choice males here. There's a particularly appealing pic of a hunky, shirtless

extra with a faux tattoo that reads "Texas," from a forgettable '60 film; a statuesque Gregory Peck; and disturbingly attractive shots of youthful John Wayne and Charlton Heston that complicate our feelings about their bad politics.

Therein rests some of the appeal of this book: It expands the frame of film and pop cultural history by deepening the views of movies we thought we knew everything about. It's what archives are all about: repositories for materials that may only appear interesting in hindsight. From our contemporary vantage point, when the construction of image is such a known quantity, a view inside a 20th-century dream factory is a nostalgic treat. ▼

Voice farm

Divas and operas in books

by Stephanie von Buchau

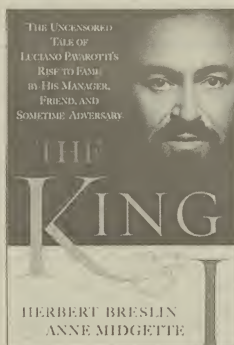
It's that season again, so let us consider some elevated musical tomes that you could give as gifts or enjoy yourself while furthering the holiday spirit of peace and goodwill. Not. Who am I kidding? Top of every opera filbert's wishlist is *The King and I* by Herbert Breslin and Anne Midgette (Doubleday, \$25.95), subtitled, "The uncensored tale of Luciano Pavarotti's rise to fame by his manager, friend and sometime adversary."

Herbert Breslin has always been a slash-and-burn type of artist's agent. His memoir of his 37-year association with Pavarotti, which came to an abrupt, acrimonious end, does not spare the horses. We hear all about the tenor's financial, sexual and culinary exploits, his childishness, selfishness, greed and meanness. Breslin says, "Sometimes he was a close and generous friend, some-

times he was a real pain in the ass."

According to Breslin, managers make the man. If young, gullible Luciano hadn't met Breslin, who then guided him to international stardom, we may never have heard of the guy, except on stage. Is that such a bad thing? Pavarotti in his prime (the 1970s) was an artist, possessing a gorgeous voice and a very finely-honed technique. After Breslin got finished pumping up his client's ego — which, in the case of an Italian tenor, doesn't take too much — The Looch became an arrogant, callous, hysterical monster. He abandoned real opera for stadium shows, stopped acting, stopped rehearsing and started canceling.

Too bad that Breslin, who proclaims to know everything about the classical music business, didn't try to steer his client into more responsible, artistic paths. Ah, but that wouldn't have made as much money. Money and ego run this book, and Breslin is no less culpa-



ble than his rotund client. Both of them are what is commonly known as "a piece of work." You may want to shower after reading this irresponsible, gossipy, vindictive, often hilarious tome. On the Sleazometer, it is off the charts.

Glamour path

Totally different is Renee Fleming's *The Inner Voice* (Viking, \$24.95). No co-author is credited, though rumor has it that Ann Patchett (*Bel Canto*, a fictional thriller that used Fleming as its central character) helped with this discussion of the career of America's most glamorous opera singer.



It is "the autobiography of a voice" rather than a tell-all, discussing such crucial elements of a singing career as "Education," "Mentors," "Business," "Longevity," "Image" and "Roles." Unlike Pavarotti, Fleming is generous with colleagues and mindful that her gift needs nurturing and respect.

Chronicling the rise of singers in a different era is Victoria Etnier Villamil's *From Johnson's Kids to Lemonade Opera*, a daunting title for a book that engagingly covers the flowering of the American opera singer from 1935-'50.

page 41 ►

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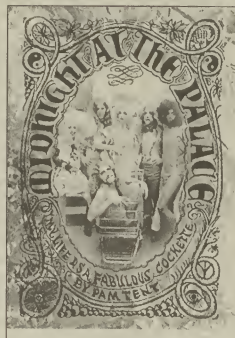
Pam Tent looks back at the Cockettes

by John F. Karr

Sex and drugs, high drag and low antics. Plus the two most glorious words in the English language: musical comedy. That's what made up the legendary theatre troupe known as the Cockettes. In their short heyday, from 1969 to '72, they astounded John Waters, who said, "Never had we seen drag queens with beards who believed in Lenin." Or who staged musical spectacles à la Busby Berkeley.

While David Weissman's recent documentary film, *The Cockettes*, offered tantalizing glimpses in the shards of film footage that it unearthed, its brief running time could hardly tell the whole story. It had a wonderful effect, though — it reunited the surviving members of the troupe, who had fallen out of touch. And from that came a wonderful book, which tells the whole story, and recreates in lavish description the life and times, the hysterical splendor of the Cockettes. It's Pam Tent's *Midnight at the Palace*, an oversized trade paperback from Alyson. It's got an appropriately glittery sheen to its cover, lots of fab photos, and an affordable people's price of only \$17.95.

Pam Tent was one of the few women in the Cockettes, as well as one of its few heterosexuals. But that didn't stop her from responding as would any other mad queen, and she gets an honorary Gay Sensibility Award for not only being there, but for telling us about it with all the panache and dirt we could hope for. Tent's book is cast as her autobiography, and begins with her adolescence in Detroit, Michigan. Before you get impa-



tient, though, and think it's beside the point to a book about the Cockettes, this personal background puts the era in perspective. Her arrival in San Francisco introduces us to the communal lifestyles, the roar of political activity, and the incendiary sexuality of the time. Now, the Cockettes were not exactly a literary bunch, so we're fortunate that Tent was among them, for she turns out to be a writer of insight and not inconsiderable skill. She's drawn upon a cache of lengthy, detailed letters she wrote home to the folks, which they thankfully saved. Also helpful were the plentiful histories compiled by Cockette chief librettist Martin Worman before his death. But Tent's hardly a dull historian. She covers a lot of ground in organized fashion, and spreads before us a cast of characters that rivals Balzac's for sheer number and personal quirks. Best of all, she can convey excitement, frequently with droll understatement.

Star maps

There are moments of glory

for the many supporting players. Even the indefatigable Bambi Lake gets a nod, for choreographing a key number for *Tinsel Tarts* in a *Hot Coma* back when she was Johnny Dancer. But most especially, you meet the stars: here's the birth of Sylvester, and the rise of Divine. Here's the wit of Pristine Condition, the glam of John Rothermel, the bitchery of Goldie Glitters. Their contributions tumble forth, in the profusion of the moment, and are charted along with those of many others.

For Cockette composer-in-residence Scrumbley Koldewyn, the only-at-that-time and only-in-this-place explosion of the troupe was "doing our bit for beautiful freakdom." When Living Theatre founder Julian Beck signed the autograph book *Pristine Condition* presented to everyone who was Who's Who during the troupe's ill-advised New York tour, he added a message: "We are going to change the world with our love and our madness." I, too, saw in political terms the Cockettes' love and madness, even the impact of their crazy musicals. Tent quotes the obituary I wrote for this paper after John Rothermel's death. "It was a short period in our history. But it was a brilliant flowering of gay consciousness from a rare group of people who lived their politics as art."

For most of the Cockettes, though, it was less politics, and more love and madness. But, you see, while creating the most incredible, flamboyant drag ever seen upon a queen, the Cockettes invented genderfuck. And that was politics. Pam Tent's *Midnight at the Palace* is a treasureable, in-the-moment tour of the lovely, mad, incidentally political Cockettes. ▼



Back row: author Sweet Pam, Scrumbley, Pristine Condition, Billy Orchid and Reggie. Front, in shopping cart: Tim Thompson.

Blakk is bakk

New work by Tim'm West, Marvin K. White

by Mark Mardon

In our village/boys' forged weapons/out of bicycle spokes/pipes and penises..."

Marvin K. White's opening poem at the reading he and fellow poet/prose writer Tim'm West gave a few weeks back at City Lights Bookstore affected me the way another young poet's words once struck me. Maybe it's not an apt comparison, but I can't help make it, since it's what resonated for me. I thought of the late Sam D'Allesandro, the sexy San Francisco poet whose verse swept me off my feet in the '80s, and whose good looks and hard body made him a rock star in the poetry scene. White is black, and D'Allesandro was white. White has that rock-star, godly sex appeal, too. I'm not sure how much cultural crossover there was between them. But I feel in White's work what I once felt about Sam's *Shippery Sins*: It grabs me by the throat and balls, deep-kisses me and sucker-punches me, all at once.

White was reading from *Last Rights*, first published in '99 and newly reissued by RedBone Press, publisher of White's new book of poems, *Nothin' Ugly Fly*. These are important works by a gifted poet,



and, along with West, one of the strongest voices of black gay identity.

Nothin' Ugly Fly carries much of childhood in its beak, a stork with a mewling babe. White's childhood was a dream, not always pleasant, but at times soaring on wings of imagination. In "nothin' ugly fly," White writes: "soon as sun crash/soon as people become they shadows/soon as skies have eyes/i fly/i fly/i fly/to your house/like uninvited omen..."

Red dirt, blakk men

"Where I come from," read



West in his powerful baritone from "Jacks Crossing," part of his sublime book *Red Dirt Revival: a poetic memoir in 6 Breaths* (Poz/Trophy Publishing, '02), "there is a long winding road a few years old paved. Before there was just dirt, red and brown; and the thick of it use'ta make us little dusty, corn-fed kids choke on long walks after oil trucks passed."

With this opening to this great poetic autobiography, West reminded me of yet another powerful poetic voice from my past, N. Scott Momaday, whose classic ac-

page 33 ►

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BEYOND THE SEA
In the era of cool, he was the soundtrack.

PG-13

BEYOND THE SEA
IN THEATRES WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 29TH.

Ghosts of Christmas past

by Victoria A. Brownworth

his is the point in the holiday season where we are glad not every show is in rerun because there's only so much Clay Aiken and Nick & Jessica we can take. The *Nick & Jessica* Christmas special delivered such a blast from the past we suddenly worried that some Gotham City-style takeover of the country had occurred. (Oh wait, that happened back on November 3.) This show was such a retro-replica of a *Lawrence Welk* or *Andy Williams* family holiday special that we half-expected to look in the mirror and find ourselves 8-years-old again. How can these two be so, well, *whole-some*? We love Nick Lachay's bad-boy looks (he is *too* cute in that Gap ad, he should always wear a slouch hat and a loose tie), and Jessica Simpson is the closest thing to a real-life Barbie we could ever hope to find. All of which would lead one to believe

these are two bratty celebs — but they're not. They're, well, *whole-some*. Weird.

Speaking of bratty celebs, is Paris Hilton *really* as fascinating as that Barbara Walters year-end special proclaims? Now admittedly, we didn't see Paris burning up the Net in her XXX-ploitation video, so perhaps we missed the specifics that make her fascinating. But we were addicted to *Simple Life*, and Nicole Ritchie was the brains, intrigue and humor of that operation.

And can we just get this off our chest? Oprah has stopped being nice. We don't know if it's the weight loss or impending menopause, but as we were watching her tell Walters that she was "destined for greatness," we found her wholly unlikable, which is how we've felt all season. It isn't that Oprah doesn't still do good works; she believes in altruism as a life plan, and we think she deserved to be #1 on Walters' list, just because she has changed so many lives over the



Oprah: No more Ms. Nice Gal!

years she's been doing her show. But Oprah has gotten judgmental and sometimes downright mean. She's missing the warmth she used to exude. True, she looks great, but we kinda miss the old Oprah, the one who could look shocked and would tear up with guests and have to cut to commercial. That Oprah is MIA. Maybe carbohydrates impact the heart more than we know.

That said, we saw one of Oprah's "Wildest Dreams" shows the other day, and she took a 30-something black woman who works at Starbucks and changed her life. This woman was a single mother of three, until she also took in her brother's six children so they wouldn't get split up in the foster-care system. The kids were stacked like sardines in Mom's two-bedroom apartment, and ranged in age from 17 to 3.

This was vintage Oprah. She took the children to Toys 'R Us, and gave them 15 minutes to get whatever they wanted. Last year, these kids got no toys because the money simply wasn't there, but are such terrific kids that they were grateful to be together and cared for by such a selfless mother, with or without Christmas presents.

Later, Oprah brought everyone to the show, and there gave Mom her big surprise: an Extreme Makeover Home Edition, replete with a house, and furniture where everyone could have their own bed.

When Oprah does things like this, we fall in love with her again. But even when she does, the light isn't there in her eyes. She spends a little too much time gazing at herself in the monitor admiring her own new svelte self. We miss the sweeter, rounder Oprah who always moved us. We miss her a lot.

Wing lift

Last season we were really missing *The West Wing*, a show we had come to depend on for brilliant writing and acting and important political messages. The acting was still terrific, but the writing had dulled, and the message had lost focus and direction.

This season, the show is re-infused with its original brilliance. This week's episode had the best leitmotif in recent memory. The show began with illusionists Penn & Teller doing a vanishing act with a scarf in a piece of paper. Then they took the American flag — which they folded properly, with Penn Gillette talk-

ing all the while about its importance — and put it inside the Bill of Rights. They lit a match, and the flag disappeared while the Bill of Rights stayed intact.

We tried to get the show to cough up the info on how this idea came about, but were unsuccessful; no reveal here. So we don't know how much was the always-smart Penn & Teller, and how much was WW writers. Either way, it was an amazing bit that has left us thinking far past the show's close.

The point was so clearly stated: Even if we burn the flag, our rights are still protected by the Constitution. We can make political statements, and democracy will still hold up under the debate that follows.

But WW didn't stop there (we said it was a leitmotif), they brought in a new character, Alan Alda, as California Sen.

Vinick, a moderate Republican who is going to run for President (a difficult role for the erstwhile Dem.). Vinick is quizzed about the

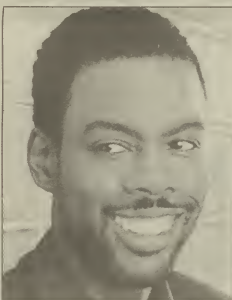


Lavender Tube

flag-burning incident (it took place in the East Wing

at Zoe Bartlett's birthday party). Unlike the Republicans we know, Vinick didn't have a kneejerk response. He proclaimed that in a democracy, the government still stands despite a flag-burning. See, the WW is so smart, it can even rehabilitate Republicans.

Is there no way to get the Bush team to watch this show?



Chris Rock takes on race & pop.

Piece of the Rock

Something else we'd like to get the Bushites and their ilk to watch is the Chris Rock HBO special, which has been replaying on digital preview. The special came out back in May, the first he'd done in years, but it keeps returning in HBO-land, and no matter how many times we watch it, we get new things from it.

Forget that Rock, a *Saturday Night Live* and *In Living Color* alum, was declared the Funniest Man in America by the media this past spring. That's a given. But Rock is also — apologies to Jon Stewart and Bill Maher, who are definitely in the running — the most political comic in America. This special is so bloody smart, so sharp, so finely tuned and keenly wrought that the first time or two you see it you miss just how revolutionary it is because it is also so pants-pissingly funny. Tivo this one. It's required viewing. Rock takes on race, money, politics, pop culture. Mind-blowing.

Speaking of mind-blowing, why did we think that PBS was immune to censorship? The Bush team got rid of the wrong

Powell. Colin's son Michael, Fascistic head of the FCC, could give Josef Goebbels a run when it comes to stifling alternative viewpoints. We can only think that WNET, New York's PBS affiliate and the flagship of the PBS network, is quaking from some of Powell's recent dictates. Why else would they refuse to run promos for one of the year's best political films, Bill Condon's superb *Kinsey*?

We were appalled enough back on Veteran's Day, when many ABC affiliates refused to air *Saving Private Ryan* because of foul language. But WNET is refusing to air ads about *Kinsey* because of the subject matter of the movie.

Correct us if we are wrong here (and we do like it when you write to nitpick, so keep doing it), but isn't this the same network that has broken ground repeatedly on sexual and political issues?

What are they thinking? Is this the way the next four years are going to play out, because if we can't depend on PBS to hold its moral ground, what hope is there for the craven likes of the Big Three and Fox? Did PBS miss the point that *Kinsey* is, in large part, about the red-blue-state moral values struggle between science and kneejerk religious extremism? You know, that discourse about whether or not evolution is theory?

Quick, get us an episode of the *West Wing*!

Last week, a faithful reader e-mailed us, "I watch GAY USA on FSTV, free-speech TV, and they just said she's a lesbian cabinet member, but that was it. Can you tell me more?"

The "she" to which reader is referring is soon-to-be Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice. First, let us say we didn't see this ourselves, nor were we able to get confirmation from FSTV. But let's just go on what this viewer heard, that Condi Rice is a lesbian.

No, we are relieved to say, because we don't need the evil likes of her in our ranks, Rice is not a lesbian. There is not a shred of evidence anywhere that she is, and in fact, if Rice is accused of anything regarding her sexuality, it is of being in love with President Bush (pardon a moment while we shudder), whom she once accidentally referred to as her husband, rather than her President.

We are all for outing the despicable when they are delivering anti-queer cant from one side of their mouths, while sucking same-sex orifices with the other. But we do not approve of Karl Rove tactics of implication and insinuation as were used everywhere in November to discredit candidates. Those tactics go like this: Gee, Rice is not now, nor has she ever been married to a man, therefore she must be a lesbian.

Ipslo facto isn't actually fact. Outing those who aren't really queer just makes us as creepy as Them. It also makes being queer into something creepy, which it definitely is not.

If our viewer got this wrong, we'd love to hear the explanation from FSTV.

Meanwhile, stay tuned, watch carefully, and don't miss this week on *All My Children*: a Christmas miracle is indeed in the works for Bianca. She may get the baby *and* the girl. Happy holidays! ▼

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FILM

Taiwanese grindhouse

'Goodbye Dragon Inn' at the Roxie Cinema

by David Lamble

It's a rainy night in Taipei, and a young Japanese man wanders into an almost deserted movie theatre. Up on the screen, a '60s sword classic, *Dragon Inn*, plays, its old-fashioned music and flowery dialogue ricocheting against the walls of the theatre. "In 1457 AD, the eunuchs had special privileges and powers." The young man, more attuned to cruising than Chinese B-movies, notices

that some of his fellow patrons bear an odd resemblance to *Dragon Inn*'s actors. Are these ghosts, warming themselves in the glow of their youthful apparitions?

In its prime as a triple-feature, Noon-to-Midnight flophouse, San Francisco's Strand Theatre attracted a large crowd, many of whom were not exactly film buffs. Going up to the Strand's top balcony meant you were there only for sex, while the lower balcony and the ground floor might attract a scattering of true moviego-

ers.

In *Goodbye Dragon Inn*, opening Friday at the Roxie, male customers play eye games standing in front of the men's room urinals. A man leaves a toilet stall, whose door then closes as if it, too, were operated by ghosts. But unlike last year's *Porn Theatre*, very little sex occurs in the bowels of this last-run theatre.

Taiwanese director Tsai Ming-Liang's refusal to move his camera within a scene causes the slightest action in his frame to assume an

The projectionist prepares in Tsai Ming-Liang's *Goodbye Dragon Inn*.

almost hypnotic importance. We observe the theatre's disabled female janitor on her lunchbreak, then limping about her rounds mopping the ghostly dirt. Standing in the auditorium, the silly swordplay projects across her brow, and we wonder if she will, in the spirit of *The Purple Rose of Cairo*, simply merge into the life of the movie. This theatre's days are numbered. Some night, even the ghosts will find a classier joint to haunt.

The Strand ended its days with the police having to haul away a quarreling couple (out of a half-dozen patrons) whose arguments were more exciting to them than the final double-feature: *Point Break* and *What's Love Got To Do With It*.

Since *Good Bye Dragon Inn*'s action is less than riveting, it is inevitable that its final scene of an empty theatre will sometimes play to a real-life version of the same. ▼

O'Brien recalls

◀ Arts cover

helped me so much. Mr. Minnelli was wonderful, too." Most people treated her well. "Miss Fontaine was very nice. So was Welles, although remote. He needed many retakes because his enunciation wasn't clear." Another favorite was Edward G. Robinson, with whom she made *Our Vines Have Tender Grapes* ('45). In fact, only Wallace Beery "was nasty." But he was to almost everyone.

O'Brien was privately tutored, so she didn't attend the studio's school. Taylor, five years older, "was very nice. But I was jealous of her. She made all the animal pictures," like *Courage of Lassie* ('43) and *National Velvet* ('45). O'Brien remembers Taylor's pet chipmunk, Nibbles. "She took him everywhere." In '49, the two, along with Allyson and Janet Leigh, would remake *Little Women*, a smash, with O'Brien getting the best reviews. Leigh's recent death was upsetting — they had remained close. "Janet was the sweetest person."

The Secret Garden ('49) didn't do well, although O'Brien's performance was much praised. Disney offered *Alice in Wonderland* with O'Brien surrounded by animated characters. "But he didn't pay much," so her mother turned it down. "Now I wish I had made it." Director Nicholas Ray talked



Margaret O'Brien with Judy G.

with her about Judy in *Rebel Without a Cause* ('55), eventually played by Natalie Wood. "I wasn't right for it. Having been privately educated, I knew nothing about teenagers in public high schools." Heller in *Pink Tights* ('60), directed by openly gay George Cukor, was her last major film. "Every actress adored working with Mr. Cukor."

She succeeded in the theatre. "I

replaced Sandy Dennis on Broadway in *A Thousand Clowns* with Jason Robards, and starred in the national company. I toured in *Barfoot in the Park* with Tab Hunter."

Did any stars fascinate her? "I was wild about Vivien Leigh. Executives arranged for me to meet her in London, where she and her husband, Laurence Olivier, were starring at the Old Vic in *Antony and Cleopatra* and *Caesar and Cleopatra*. She had me to tea and was so beautiful, so lovely. She gave me an autographed picture. Mr. Olivier asked if I wanted his autograph. I said, 'No, just Miss Leigh's.' Now I wish I had his, too!" As for the men, "I saw Clark Gable, Spencer Tracy, every day. They were like family. I really wanted to meet Burt Lancaster, but he was at Paramount. I finally did."

O'Brien doesn't feel she was exploited. "I had friends my own age who weren't in movies. My studio stand-in was a good friend. I liked being around adults. Between pictures, my mother, who was a bit like Auntie Mame, took me traveling. We went all over the world. It was wonderful."

There's also a San Francisco connection. "My maternal grandmother was given a Spanish land grant and once owned Telegraph Hill." She cannot recall ever visiting the Castro Theatre as a child, but "I'm looking forward to it now." ▼

Blakk is bakk

◀ page 31

count of Kiowa life in *The Way to Rainy Mountain* opened my eyes to a whole new cultural universe. Maybe the only similarity in Momaday and West is the pastoral way they ease us into their worlds, by focusing on the very dirt from which they sprang.

In the poem "unnatural Acts," West effectively describes one of the primary emotional strains running through his work, the violence of some against his desire to express his love for other men, especially other blakk men. He writes: "a damn trip/how some would rather see/his blakk fist/smashing teeth/gum-bleeding and swollen/blakk skin/than witness/him caressing my hand/him lovingly stroking my face."

West, a scholar with graduate degrees in Liberal Studies/Philosophy and Modern Thought and Literature from The New School for Social Research and Stanford University, now lives in Washington, DC, but he first made waves

in the Bay Area queer scene as a member of Deep Dickollective ("Famous Outlaw League of Proto-Negroes"), the nationally renowned "homo-hop" group. He is a whirlwind of creativity, and his latest marvelous idea is to produce an album in conjunction with *Red Dirt Revival*. Cellular Records has just issued West's *Songs from Red Dirt*, and the pairing of book and album is a brilliant stroke. You get the writer's voice and the singer's voice, the stories of red dirt told in different ways, the combined works fleshing out one of the literary/hip hop world's most fascinating characters.

The album is hip hop, but not in the familiar angry/rebel mode; it's more in the cool, almost louny vein of Tricky or Faithless, with a little bit of Michael Franti and Spearhead mixed in.

Touching scars

"I just wanted to raise his shirt to skin/sit and revisit his appendix scar/reminiscent about his stomach bursting/finger count how many stitches there are"

White's words again, this time

from *Nothin' Ugly Fly*, and the scars remind me of Sam. Sam embodied the SF queer poetry scene, scars and all. But Sam died of AIDS, and now it's White who best symbolizes queer poetry in its prime. Partly it's his deep, seductive voice, but more it's how masterfully he paints scenes we can relate to: "there will be days/when the assistant pastor/will get down on his knees with you/tuesdays prayer circles/only he will get up/he will put more than words/in your mouth"

White's poem "Turning Him In" is a fine exercise in recalling the disaster of a queer relationship, and when White read it, he said, "I'm so over him, but I like to read to remind myself." It concludes, lines broken the way White broke his breath: "he/made/me/call/him/lover/believed breaking me/was the only way to keep me/rehearsed me the answer/i am nobody/to his daily question/who are you?" ▼

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OUT & ABOUT

Calendare by Mark Mardon



They were a colorful tribe: Hibiscus, late of The Cockettes

Pam's big tent

The first couple of times I heard Pam Tent read from her then work-in-progress, *Midnight at the Palace: My Life as a Fabulous Cockette*, her wonderfully entertaining history of the Cockettes, I was attending some backyard salons at an art/performance party at Rumi Missabu's house, alive inside and out with the Cockettes spirit. Given the magical splendor of the Cockettes' party at the time, it wasn't hard for me to imagine how completely trippy and colorful the Cockettes must have been in their heyday.

As "Sweet Pam," Ms. Tent was at the center of a psychedelic carnival on heels. They did nothing sober. Their story fascinates modern audiences who think such nonsense belongs to a time long past, the era as portrayed in the masterful documentary on the Cockettes by Bill Weber and David Weissman. The duo told the Cockettes story cinematically using archival footage and current interviews, and did an outstanding job. Tent has matched their artistry in her vivid, in-depth, first-person prose rendering. Her style flows easily, crisply, and is a never-ending font of hippie fabulosity.

Last weekend Tent took to the stage at the Main Library, where the Hormel Center's Jim Van Buskirk introduced her to an audience of Cockettes and their followers, along with newcomers to the Cockettes fold, and some who may have stumbled into the room by accident and been amazed by the show. Tent had recently read at City Lights Bookstore, and has been doing readings non-stop during the book's progress. At this event, however, she read only a couple of pages from the book's introduction, then showed us a new film clip put together by filmmaker Weber, comprised, we were told, by outtakes and bits not used in the feature film. The result was stunning. With no titles or credits and no narration, just sequences dubbed with Cockettes music and snatches of dialogue, the new tribute was a mini-masterpiece, a must-see for Cockettes aficionados.

What amazes and fascinates me about the Cockettes is how they are successfully re-tooling their art, updating it for the times, capitalizing on their notoriety, and doing so with an original flourish — but without the LSD! I witnessed their modern style at Rumi's art/performance salons, with Tent's readings, outstanding music performances by their friends, fashion shows, comedy and more. They've still got that old spirit!

Starting on January 1, 2005 and running the entire month of January, the Cockettes will be hosting "A Cocktail of Glamour and Anarchy," the latest all-out art/performance event curated by Original Cockette Rumi, to take place 2005 at the Giorgi Gallery, 2911 Claremont Ave. (at Ashby) in Berkeley. There you can peruse original works of wearable art, hangable art, and photography by veteran Cockettes contributors Michael Johnstone, Bill Bowers, Carl Linkhart, Gustavo Villareal, David Faulk, and Joshua Freiwald. Each Saturday and Sunday of the month will feature a performance salon from 2-4 p.m. (including one on January 9 hosted by yours truly), featuring many of the stellar performers long associated with the Cockettes, as well as some newcomers. Details will be forthcoming here, but you can also keep posted with updates on the Giorgi Gallery website at www.giorgigallery.com ▼



The Whoa Nellies with Leigh Crow and Miss Connie Champagne bring Holiday Bubblegum Pop to Wilde Oscar's Irish Pub. See Sunday.

Fri 17

Margaret O'Brien Connie Champagne in A Judy Garland Christmas @ Castro Theatre

That Amazing Master of Reviving Oldies, Empresario Marc Huestis — better than ever at 50! — presents *A Judy Garland Christmas*, with Margaret O'Brien live and in person, interviewed by KRON's own amazing superstar, film critic Jan Wahl! Plus San Francisco's brilliant, beautiful, beloved songstress Connie Champagne as Judy! (Congrats, Connie, for your super rendition of "Bring Him Home/I'll Be Home for Christmas" at "Help is on the Way for the Holidays"!). Special guest appearance by Matthew Martin as Helen Lawson from *Valley of the Dolls* singing "I'll Plant My Own (Christmas) Tree." Big Screen projection of Vincent Minnelli's 1944 holiday classic *Meet Me in St. Louis*. Academy Award® winner O'Brien played "Tootie" in film, with its hits "The Trolley Song," "The Boy Next Door," and "Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas." Partial proceeds benefit Family Link, seeking to serve people with AIDS and other life-threatening illnesses by offering hospitality to their visiting friends and relatives. \$27.50; 7pm (at 10pm, Ms. O'Brien will be available for an autograph signing in the mezzanine; and Huestis will also be hosting a celebration of his 50th birthday). Tix at A Different Light Bookstore, 489 Castro St. or online at ticketweb.com

The Man Who Came To Dinner

@ Theatre Rhinoceros

Opening night: Theatre Rhinoceros continues its 27th Season with the timeless American classic comedy/farce, *The Man Who Came To Dinner*, written by Moss Hart and George S. Kaufman. Everyone's favorite nasty houseguest is here to ruin everyone's favorite holiday. This holiday feast stars that irrepressible scamp and Theatre Rhinoceros favorite, P.A. Cooley as Sheridan Whiteside — The Houseguest from Hell. Directed by John Fisher. \$15-\$28. Opening Nights: Fri. & Sat., Dec. 17 & 18. Showtimes: Wed. - Sat. at 8pm; Sun. Eves at 7pm; Sun. Mats at 3pm. Dec. 19, 26 & Jan. 2, 9. There are NO performances on Dec. 25 and Jan. 1. Main stage, Theatre Rhinoceros, 2926 16th St. (btwn Mission / So. Van Ness). Tix: 415-861-5079. Info: www.theatrhino.org

Wesla Whitfield with Mike Greensill @ Empire Plush Room

In concert: One of San Francisco's favorite divas, Wesla Whitfield, who received a huge ovation at the recent Richmond-Ermet AIDS Foundation gala, "Help is on the Way for the Holidays VI," at the Herbst Theatre. There she wheeled her wheelchair about with ease and grace as she sang a soulful rendition of "Some Children See Him (Alfred Burt). Whitfield will be celebrating her 25th anniversary with a special holiday show, "In My Life," with her husband Mike Greensill on piano, and John Wiitala on bass. \$25-\$30. 8pm. Special New Year's Eve show \$45 & \$90; 10:30pm. Thru Jan. 9. Tix: 415-885-2800; www.ticketweb.com

Princess Bride: The Play @ The Dark Room

Princess Bride: The Play, Impossible Production's tribute to the hottest fairy tale ever written. The impossibly lovely Buttercup falls in love with Westley, a poor peasant farm boy who dies at the hands of the Dread Pirate Roberts. The fabled hunter,

Prince Humperdinck, convinces Buttercup to marry him, but not before the land's most notorious criminal ensemble, Vizzini the Sicilian, Fezzik the giant and Inigo the fencer, kidnap her — with the mysterious Man in Black hot on their trail. They face the Cliffs of Insanity, traverse the Fire Swamp, rage against the Machine and go to the Chapel of Love; but they'll need a Miracle before this inconceivable epic of passions ends happily ever after. Directed by Cameron Eng & Jim Fourniadis and produced by Erin Ohannesson & Cameron Eng. Starring: Don Wood, Nancy Bower, Josh Lenn, John Filgas, Mark Para, Cameron Eng, Jim Fourniadis, Seanetta, Laura Drus, and Patrick Biggs. \$15 at the door; \$12.50 at www.acteva.com/go/improad. Fridays and Saturdays at 8pm; Sundays at 3pm. Plays Dec. 17, 18 and 19. The Dark Room Theater, 2263 Mission St. (btwn 18th & 19th). Info: www.darkroomsf.com

Freedom SMACKdown @ ODC Theater

Mary Armentrout, Tina D'Elia, Prado Gomez & JoAnn Selisker perform in Freedom SMACKdown: "Was your freedom just SMACKED? We don't have the answer but we've got the antidote. ODC Theater has joined together three of its favorite local mavericks for a dangerous, subversive, code red extravaganza of hand-wringing, gender-bending, laugh-out-loud performance art... Watch and believe as JoAnn Selisker whacks holy books with a hammer. Mary Armentrout takes off her clothes (again), and Tina D'Elia rips up the concept of "team" so hard that you'll wonder which one you play for. Sure to be an instant Holiday Classic!" Freedom SMACKdown was conceived and curated by ODC Theater Director, Rob Bailis, after being inspired by the work by each of the invited artists, whom he'd seen in venues around the Bay. \$15. 8pm. Three days only: Dec. 16-18. ODC Theater, 3153 17th St. at Shotwell. Tix: 415-863-9834; www.odctheater.org

Christmas Revels @ Scottish Rite Theater, Lake Merritt

California Revels presents the 19th Annual "Christmas Revels" — A Theatrical Celebration of the Winter Solstice. Featuring Drastic, Dance, Drama, and Dance of 18th Century Scotland. Directed by David Parr. Special Guest Artists: Kevin Carr (storyteller/piper/fiddler), Susan Rode Morris (soprano) Chris Caswell (celtic musician) Wendell Brooks (baritone soloist) and the San Francisco Scottish Fiddlers. An evening filled with time-honored rituals; traditional dances; folk plays; the high-spirited music of 20 fiddlers playing Scottish tunes; and holiday songs performed by a lively and talented cast of adults and chil-



Elaborate costumes and gorgeous music characterize "Christmas Revels" at the Scottish Rite Theater on Lake Merritt. See Friday.

dren. \$15-\$42 (discounts for children under 12, seniors 65+ and groups of 20+); Group sales (20 or more) or wheelchair orders call 510-893-9853. Show runs Fri., Dec. 17 at 7:30pm; Sat., Dec. 18 at 1pm and 5pm; Sun., Dec. 19 at 1pm and 5pm. Scottish Rite Theater on Lake Merritt (1547 Lakeside Drive, Oakland). Tix: Tele-sales* ticket service 415-773-1181; online at www.calrevels.org

Kinsey Sicks: Oy Vey in a Manger! @ NCTC

America's Favorite Dragapella Beauty Shop Quartet return to New Conservatory Theatre Center with their holiday hit, *Kinsey Sicks: Oy Vey in a Manger!* This year, four stars shine over Bethlehem as the Kinsey Sicks deploy their biting musical wit and over-the-top drag in the global effort to stamp out holiday cheer. Featuring Ben Schatz as "Rachel," Irwin Kellers as "Wimie," Chris Dilley as "Trampolina" and Jeff Manabat as "Trixie." \$25-\$35. Wed.-Fri. 8pm; Sat. & New Year's Eve at 7:30pm & 10pm. Thru Dec. 31 (no shows Dec. 24 & 25). NCTC, 25 Van Ness Ave. Tix/info: 415-861-8972; www.nctcsf.org

Spencer Day & Friends @ Pan Pacific Hotel

Tin Pan Alley Productions presents Spencer Day and Friends in concert, where Day will introduce his new composition, "Tin Pan Alley Blues." A benefit for Tin Pan Alley Productions, a project of Rainbolt Hampton Arts Foundation, whose mission is to promote the continuation and growth of the Great American Songbook by producing community concerts, raising scholarship funds for musicians, and creating an online community resource. \$25. 8pm. The Pan Pacific Hotel, 500 Post St. at Mason. Info: 415-771-8600; www.tinpanalley.org

John McCullough with Alan Choy @ Martuni's

John McCullough sings "A Little Christmas" with accompanist Alan Choy. Light the candle of your holiday spirit with McCullough's heartfelt renditions of Christmas favorites. Lua Hadar and Linda Kosut of the Kitchennettes described McCullough as "rich and juicy-voiced... If a steak could sing, he'd be it!" Sounds yummy! \$15 cover. Two shows, at 3 & 8pm. Martuni's, 4 Valencia St. Res: 415-241-0205.

TRANSLATE

@ Three Dollar Bill Café

Back for its third month and growing fast — Youth Gender Project Presents: TRANSLATE: A trans youth open mic. A space for trans/genderqueer youth (25 and under) to express themselves through poetry, spoken word, music etc. All allies welcome to attend. Youth Gender Project is a youth-led organization working to empower and advocate for trans, gender-variant and questioning (TQQ) youth. Free coffee! Sign up starts at 6:45pm/show is 7-9pm. Three Dollar Bill Café @ The LGBT Center, 1800 Market St. Info: Brooklynne or Courtney at 415-865-5625 or email: Brooklynne@youthgenderproject.org

The Women + Trannyshack @ Bridge Theatre

It is in the classic spirit of showmanship that has come to define The Bridge theatre, one of the few remaining single-screen movie houses successfully operating in the city, presents its 65th Anniversary Celebration and 1939 Film Festival. Just in time for the holidays, The Bridge screens *The Women!* Catfighting and bitchery abound in this adaptation of Clare Boothe's Broadway hit about rumors and romance. The all-female cast includes Joan Crawford, Norma Shearer, Rosalind Russell, Joan Fontaine, Mary Boland and Paulette Goddard. Directed by George Cukor (*The Philadelphia Story*, *Adam's Rib*, *A Star is Born*). Evening shows on Fri. & Sat. preceded by live action drag sequence courtesy of the wild and crazy queens of Trannyshack! \$8. Screens Fri. Dec. 17 at 1pm, 4pm, 7pm. Sat. Dec. 18 at 1pm, 4pm, & 7pm. 3010 Geary Blvd. Info: (415) 267-4893; www.bridge theatre.com

Powermasters!

@ The Powerhouse

New on Fridays: Dill Media/Raging Stallion Studios present Powermasters! with sexy models for your ogling pleasure. Giveaways. Celebrate the new porn video from the dirty mind of Andy dill. PEC Party with DJ Michael Mangiaforte. Bare-chest drink specials. \$5. 9pm-midnight. 1347 Folsom St. Info: powerhouse-sf.com

Sat 18

Protest @ Castro Theatre

Audiences in Action, a group of film lovers committed to saving the Castro Theatre, have organized a "Protest to Save the Castro Theatre," from 3-5pm. Say the organizers: "For the past 28 years, we have taken the Castro Theatre for granted. We always assumed it would remain a unique combination of beautiful movie palace and intelligent, innovative programming. But now this cultural treasure is in jeopardy. The owners' recent decision to dismiss Anita Monga, one of the top programmers in the country, has had repercussions that are only beginning to be felt. Filmmakers and distributors have pulled their films from the Castro's upcoming schedule. Because of Monga's abrupt



Princess Kennedy hosts "A Punk Rock Christmas" featuring The YuleTards at Trannysack. See Tuesday.

departure, the Castro's ability to present rare archival prints, re-released classics, and cutting-edge documentaries is unparalleled." The protest will be in front of the Castro Theatre (429 Castro St.). Info: rehreanita@yahoo.com; www.duboce.net/castro

A Chanticleer Christmas @ St. Ignatius Church

Chanticleer, the internationally acclaimed 12-man vocal ensemble, under the direction of Joseph Jennings, presents "A Chanticleer Christmas," offering a blend of traditional carols, medieval and Renaissance sacred works, and moving spirituals. \$25 gen'l admission; \$37 & \$42 reserved seating. 8pm. Tix/info: chanticleer.org

Midnight Mass: Whatever Happened To Baby Jane? @ The Bridge

"But you are, Blanche, you are in that chair!" Now regarded as a camp classic, this suspense shocker *Whatever Happened To Baby Jane?* had audiences gasping upon its initial release. Bette Davis tears up the screen as demented former child star Baby Jane, who torments her crippled, wheelchair-bound sister Blanche, an ex-movie queen (played by a surprisingly sympathetic Joan Crawford). Directed by Robert Aldrich (*Kiss Me Deadly*, *Hush*, *Hush*, *Sweet Charity*), (1962). For this Bridge Theatre Anniversary show, Peaches Christ will host a special one off Midnight Mass show with sidekick Martini, as they present their brand new short film, *Whatever Happened to Peaches Christ?*

Queer Leather Nosh

@ Three Dollar Bill Café
noon-3 pm: San Francisco Queer Leather Nosh (formerly the Munch), for anyone ages 18 and over in the leather community of any gender or sexuality who identifies as queer. Please note: no outside food is allowed as the Three Dollar Bill Café is good business trying to make money (and they are also very good to us and welcoming). For those who have never been or heard of a nosh/munch, this is a gathering of like-minded people to discuss anything and everything under the sun, as well as a place to meet new people. Three Dollar Bill Café, 1st floor, SF LGBT Community Center, 1800 Market St.

TeMa @ El Rio

KARMA presents TeMa, offering The Best World Music in the City! DJ's Garcia (KARMA, The End-Up) and Suresh (6 Degrees Records) bring you the hottest Salsa, Samba, Desi Beats, Dancehall, Reggaeton, Afrobeat, Hip-Hop, Bhangra, and House! Hot Go-Go Dancers. Hookas on the patio. New Outdoor Heaters. All Nations and Persuasions Welcome. Free b4 10pm; \$5 after. 10pm-2am. El Rio, 3158 Mission St. (near 24th St. BART). Info: 415-282-3325; www.elriosf.com

Sugar @ The Stud

One of SF's longest-running, most successful queerish nightclub, Sugar, offers pure House Music with resident DJ's Ellen Per-rato & Leonard and Naz, plus special guest DJ's. Free b4 11pm. 9:30pm - 4am. The Stud, 9th & Harrison. Info: StudSF.com

Sun 19

Arts & Crafts Sale and Open House

@ The Crucible, Oakland

The Crucible, an industrial and fine arts education center located in West Oakland, presents the "Gifts Arts and Crafts Sale and Winter Open House." Handmade crafts, jewelry, furniture, ceramics, glass beads, vessels, and baubles, recycled steel sculptures, neon wall art, etc. in our massive indoor warehouse in West Oakland to eager holiday shoppers. Learn about The Crucible's classes in the fine and industrial arts. Event includes kids activities, student and faculty art sale, a bronze pour (on Saturday only), industrial art demonstrations such as glass flameworking and welding, fire performances and more. Food and re-

freshments will be available. Proceeds benefit participating artists and The Crucible's arts education programs. The Crucible is an arts education center that fosters a collaboration of arts, industry and community. Through training in the fine and industrial arts, The Crucible promotes creative expression, reuse of materials and innovative design while serving as an accessible arts venue for the public. The Crucible is a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization. Sat. & Sun., Dec. 18 & 19. 10am-5pm Sat.; 10am-4pm Sun. The Crucible, 1260 7th Street at Union, Oakland. Info: 510.444.0919; www.thecrucible.org

Winter Solstice Craft's Faire @ CELLspace

Local Artisans & Crafts people will sell their treasures including clothing, jewelry, marionettes, dolls, handpuppets, glassware, sculpture, mosaics, & much more. CELLspace is a vibrant community of artists/artisans working in their studios, offering performances, and creating community. 10am to 6pm. 2050 Bryant St.

Whoa Nellies' Holiday Extravaganza @ Wilde Oscar's

San Francisco's Queer Bubblegum Preservation Society The Whoa Nellies present their annual holiday extravaganza at Wilde Oscar's Irish Pub. Featuring the vocal artistry of Leigh Crow and Miss Connie Champagne, the Nellies will sing their fave one-hit wonder hits from the 1960's while toasting the best of the holiday season. Best of all, this show is absolutely free! 6:30-10pm. Wilde Oscar's, 1900 Folsom at 15th St. Info: 415-621-7145.

Seth Montfort @ Victorian Englander House

Victorian Englander House presents Christmas and Solstice Music featuring Seth Montfort, piano. Two Gargantuan Piano Battles in Symphony Space: 1. Old World Piano Symphony A. Castle B. Cathedral C. Carnival. 2. Aztec Piano Symphony. \$7-\$12. 3PM. Victorian Englander House, 807 Franklin St. @ Turk. Info: 415-362-6080; www.sfc古典icalmusic.com

Holiday Queer Tango @ Synergy School

Queer Ballroom presents "Holiday Queer Tango Dance!" No partner or experience needed. 4pm beginners & intermediate steps Argentine Tango Workshop by Eva from BeBoppin' Babes! 5:30-7pm Milonga Practica — dance to traditional and contemporary Argentine tango music. \$10 donation (free if under 21; half off if enrolled in Mon. or Wed. Swing, Salsa or Ballroom classes. Synergy School, 1387 Valencia at 25th (near 24th St. BART). Info: 415-305-8242; 2queerballroom.com

Musicians for Peace Holiday Groove @ StudioZ

Come party for the planet and a U.S. Dept. of Peace. Join the DoPeace Campaign. A benefit for Musicians and Fine Artists for World Peace with the blessing of Dennis Kucinich. Jolie De Pauw of Lotus Dog will perform with many other Kucinich Butterfly People. Featuring Musicians for Peace with Sherry Glaser, Fontain's M.U.S.E., Laramie Crocker, Cyakha Grace of Land of the Blind and a cast of too many to count. Kirtan by Maha Kirtan with Saraswati, Jean & Richard (PeaceFest, Golden Gate Park). Mary Eberspacher performs a crystal bowl tuning and chanting. Steve Baerman (aka Swami Beyondananda) and Glaser do comedy routines, including Glaser's "Activist Mom." Cindy Sheehan of Military Families Speak Out (www.mfsos.org) shares her spiritual journey since losing son Casey Sheehan in Sadr City, Baghdad, Iraq on April 4, 2004. Crocker performs his song "Cargo" in honor of Casey Sheehan. Karil Daniels, the producer of *Voices of Dissent*, will show an 8-minute trailer of her documentary about authentic patriotism and protecting First Amendment rights. The revolution will be televised! StudioZ Gallery, 1515 Folsom at 11th. Info: www.artintindustry.net

Mon 20

Jeff Compasso

@ Stormy Leather

West Hollywood fine art photographer Jeff Compasso shows his latest human form photographs at the new gallery space at Stormy Leather. Compasso's dramatic black & white images range from classical nudes to edgy fetish. Show also includes his recent color work. Signed, limited edition gallery prints available for sale during show. Open daily from 12 noon-7pm. Stormy Leather, 1158 Howard St. Info: 415-626-0305; www.JeffCompasso.com

Melissa Etheridge Info Network

@ Soluna Cafe & Lounge

10th Anniversary Melissa Etheridge Fan Club & DVD Release Party! Come celebrate the 10 Year Anniversary of Melissa Etheridge's official fan club, The Melissa Etheridge Information Network, and the release of her latest DVD/CD *Lucky Live!* Party it up with other fans of Melissa and have a chance to take part in a special raffle to win some exclusive Melissa Etheridge memorabilia. Your party hosts: Susan Caust, Staci Fricker & Heather McNeilly. 6:30pm. Soluna Cafe & Lounge — 272 McAllister St. (at Larkin, Civic Center Plaza). Info: 415-621-2200. Info: www.melissaeetheridge.com

Tue 21

The YuleTards: A Punk Rock Christmas @ Stud Bar

Blast away all that tinsel and good cheer with Princess Kennedy and the return to Trannysack of "A Punk Rock Christmas," featuring the YuleTards (Princess Kennedy, Deena Davenport, Jazizi Cappuccino, Brendah Suppository Spelling, Jason El Diablo and newest Tard Metal Patricia). As always with your hostess Hekina, DJ Derek, and MISS Chocolate. \$7. 10pm-3am (show at midnight). The Stud Bar, 9th & Harrison. Info: www.princesskennedy.com

Ancient Solstice Ritual for Queer Women @ MCC-SF

Celebrate the winter solstice with a spirited and diverse group of queer women from all over the Bay area. Women from all religious traditions and no religious tradition will participate and all are most welcome. We will walk the spiral, following the footsteps of all the circles of women who have come before us. Led by the elders of WomenSpirit at MCCSF. All who identify as women are welcome. No charge. 7-8:30pm. Metropolitan Community Church San Francisco, 150 Eureka St. SF (between 18th and 19th). Info: info@mccsf.org

Wed 22

Women's Full Moon Gathering, Change Makers Books, Oakland

All women & girls are invited to share an evening of nourishment and sisterhood. Enjoy music, poetry, dance, storytelling & tarot. Make an offering of your special gifts. Please RSVP and let us know if you'd like to contribute a song, poem or group exercise. Please bring Drums, Rattles & Potluck dish to share. Festive Moon Attire encouraged but not required. Blessed Be! FREE (shopping before & after always encouraged). 7-9:30pm. Change Makers Books & Gifts for Women 6536 Telegraph Ave. (4 blocks south of Ashby, on the corner of 6th and Telegraph), Oakland. RSVP: 510-655-2405. Info: www.ChangeMakers-ForWomen.com

Thu 23

Latke Ball @ The Factory

Latke Ball - The hottest hippest Jewish party of the year! More than 1,000 Young Jewish Adults talking, dancing, drinking and celebrating. Come, meet people, make new friends and have an amazing night. Music: DJ Ean Golden & DJ Blaqwest spinning 80s, funk & hip hop. Special Guest Is-raeli DJ. Dress: Club Attire, \$30 door. 9pm-2am. The Factory, 525 Harrison St (at 1st). Tix/info: www.latkeball.org

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Buffing up for 'Bad Education'

by David Lamble

Imagine my shock, upon meeting Spanish actor Fele Martínez, to see that he has shed the splendid mane of hair that framed his boyish features in films like *Lovers of the Arctic Circle*, *Talk To Her* and now, *Bad Education*. Martínez, who cut his acting teeth in Spanish TV, says this trio of films has altered his career as much as working with *Bad Education* director Pedro Almodóvar altered his body.

Co-stars Gael García Bernal and Martínez would "go to the gym every morning. It was like hard labor in the morning, savage. And a terrible, terrible diet: fish, meat, no sweets, no bread, zero beer. My personality changed. I was angry at everyone at first. But the results are there. When the shooting comes, you look gorgeous, you feel strong, and your attitude in front of the camera changes."

A decade ago, after the negative reviews for *Kika*, a film that used a rape scene to satirize tabloid media, Almodóvar told me that some of his American fans were awaiting another male-oriented thriller like *Law of Desire*. "I'm sorry that my gay fans miss characters like these. But don't worry, there'll be a strong gay film in the future." With *Bad Education*, Almodóvar has finally redeemed this promise.

Opening with a *Vertigo*-like credit sequence and a score that contains more than a hint of Bernard Herrman, *Bad Education* finds a young film director, Enrique (Martínez), looking through the tabloids for saucy story ideas. One concerns a woman in Taiwan who "threw herself into a pool full of crocodiles. While the crocodiles were devouring her, the woman hugged one of them without making a sound."

His creative juices flowing, Enrique receives a visitor: a handsome young man (Bernal) who

says he's Enrique's long-lost friend, Ignacio. Sixteen years ago, Enrique and Ignacio's schoolboy romance was cruelly ended by an evil priest. Ignacio, who insists on being called Angel, hands Enrique a short story that details the priest's duplicity and abusive behavior, but adds a film noir coda in which a mysterious transsexual seeks revenge. No other living director could deliver the lessons behind the priestly abuse (along with a poignant if bizarre Spanish version of "Moon River") while giving us the romance of two angelic-looking Catholic schoolboys who bond while jacking off at the movies.

Eye contact

Martínez says the stunning

swimming-pool scenes between him and Bernal took a week to film. "While Angel is giving me his ideas [for shooting his story], I'm questioning him with my eyes. Angel wants to play [the drag role], and I'm morbidly curious, because I don't really know who is this person."

While the Spanish Church has not been rocked by scandals like its American counterpart, the people of Spain know the same things have been happening. "We all know it, but we don't want to talk about it. Over time, the Church has covered everything up. It's a very perverse kind of love that basically drives the characters [affected by the abuse] into pulling away from each other, and then finding one another again."

Opens Wed., Dec. 22. ▼



Fele Martínez and Gael García Bernal in Almodóvar's *Bad Education*

G. García Bernal

◀ Arts cover

ments, and therefore it was a fundamentalist decision. They are behaving fundamentalist, which is scary."

In the 2002 art-house hit *The Crime of Father Amaro*, Bernal became a poster-boy for the misdeeds of priests (Father Amaro seduces a young virgin). Director Carlos Carrera says Bernal brings a special, incendiary quality to the screen. "He can be the most innocent, angelic character; and he also has this evil in his eyes."

Now, in Pedro Almodóvar's new film *Bad Education*, Bernal plays an angry transsexual who returns to a church school to blackmail the priest who abused him as a student. Bernal says both films offer the Catholic hierarchy an opportunity for a kind of public repentance.

"If there existed such a thing as a progressive Catholic Church, they would use these films to purge, to acknowledge that things like this [the abuse of women and molestation of altar boys] occur, that they're going to clean up their

transnational business, and also respect the faith of people who believe in it. That's what these priests do, they take advantage of peoples' faith, and they destroy it."

Bernal adds that one of the problems confronting the Catholic Church is its use of liturgical language to put a better face on dark deeds. "It's not a sin to play with kids, no, it's a crime, and I think they should be punished."

Doubly blessed

Not many actors face such an embarrassment of riches: promoting two art-house hits that are competing for awards and critical kudos. *The Motorcycle Diaries*, directed by Brazilian Walter Salles, stars Bernal as the 23-year-old Che Guevara, embarking on a bike trip across South America with a fellow medical student in 1952. Discovering a continent marked by breathtaking beauty and chronic poverty, the young Che has, by film's end, become the embryonic revolutionary whose image is perhaps one of the world's more revered and reviled.

Bernal is also brilliantly showcased in the latest example of director Pedro Almodóvar's cinema of men behaving badly. The Spanish master is at his best in *Bad Education*, a triple-barreled homage to Hitchcock, Billy Wilder and himself. Inspired by a scene in Almodóvar's dark comedy *Law of Desire* ('86), *Bad Education* sizzles

with an electric triple-role turned in by Bernal, who is beautiful and deadly both as a Barbara Stanwyck-like *femme fatale* and a boyish *enfant terrible* young actor looking for a killer part.

The film's no cheat in the sexual sizzle department: Bernal's three characters all perform operatically, giving and receiving. We're offered a delectable, full-frontal, wet-jockey-shorts shot, as well as a reprise of Bernal's underwater ballet from *Y Tu Mama*. But Almodóvar warns that these characters do not regard sex as "a source of pleasure, but one of pain for everyone else."

Inner tranny

Sipping tea from good hotel china, Bernal is amused but exasperated when I cite *The New York Times* report of creative differences between himself and Almodóvar about his racy love scenes with Spanish hottie Fele Martínez. *The Times*' Lynn Hirschberg quoted Bernal saying, "Everyone has their own inner transvestite, but my inner transvestite is Mexican-Caribbean, and that's a very different way of putting on a show than Pedro's." Bernal shoots back that the *Times* report was grossly overstated. "In any creative process, there is always conflict, but that conflict had nothing to do with what they've always been inventing. It's crazy what they've been saying. How could I have wanted to do a Mex-

ican drag queen? That's crazy, I mean, it's a Spanish drag queen. The conflict was because of the creative process, as with any other director."

"With Alfonso Cuarón, it was a way more conflicting experience to do *Y Tu Mama* because of ideas that we all had. Conflict just means it was complex. There was never a fight. It's weird to even talk about it, because you can see the work, it's there on screen, and you see I have no problem doing it. If I had a problem, I wouldn't do it. I'm grown up enough so as not to be abused in that sense."

In *Motorcycle Diaries*, Bernal's backseat lovemaking with the actress playing Che's girlfriend is so frisky we can see his skin redden. Later, Bernal gives a such a heart-felt portrayal of the young Che's nearly fatal asthma attack that we actually fear for the actor's safety. Bernal says the realism stems from the fact that he's also asthmatic.

The actor confesses that one of the hardest of his celebrated love scenes was with his buddy Diego Luna. The scene, which startled audiences worldwide, had the two young friends go from a tentative kiss to full lovemaking as the scene ends. "I think that happened with a bunch of tequilas that we had. Doing any sex scene, it's hard. But I get more nervous doing a sex scene with a girl I like than with my best friend, Diego. Actually, with him, I get nervous, because I'm going to giggle!" ▼

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When 81-year-old retired janitor Henry Darger died in 1973, his landlords discovered hundreds of watercolors and paintings, bizarre landscapes of little girls, whose pretty dresses sometimes but not always concealed their penises, waging fearsome battles against the forces of evil.

The other half of Darger's lifework was more than 15,000 single-spaced, typed pages of his novel *In the Realm of the Unreal*, the epic saga of the virtuous Vivian girls and their religious war against the evil Glandelinian army. Jessica Yu's documentary about the great American outsider artist opens Wednesday, December 22, at the Castro Theatre. ▼

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The cock cometh

Much ado in the Year of the Rooster

by Mister Marcus

The Year of the Monkey (2004) is winding down and everyone is frantically finishing up their holiday shopping. The new year approaches, the Year of the Rooster on the Chinese calendar. But don't start crowing just yet, because it's still Christmas shopping time, with great bargains available at most leather stores around the country. You can still go ape over bondage gear!

In San Francisco, you have Stompers Boots, Mister S, Image Leather and A Taste of Leather to choose from. Farther afield, you have Leather Masters in San Jose, Northbound Leather in Toronto, and CJ's Leather in Denver. Many other leather-oriented emporia offer merchandise online. If ordering via Internet, do it immediately for Christmas delivery. You wouldn't want to disappoint your favorite man or woman on Christmas morning would you?

The leather "contest circuit" has pretty much played out for 2004, but next year the madness starts anew with scores of weekend leather events scheduled. The IML 2005 roster is growing, growing, and more names are being added to the list almost every week.

The more seasoned events producers already have their stuff "out there" — and then there are those who wait until the last minute, with press releases almost always lacking full information. Bahl Humba! It pays to get your guy (or woman) "out there." The earlier the better!

Since IML director Bill Stadt will not be attending MAL in D.C. next month, no word has been received (yet) as to when the IML 2005 Judges will be made known, but already, several IML 2005 hopefuls will be there to meet each other and hopefully learn who their judges will be in Chicago in May.

Here's a short list of major events scheduled in 2005, by no means complete:

January

Of course the Mid-Atlantic Leather weekend is scheduled for January 14-16. The host hotel, Washington Plaza is already sold out but other hotels within a block of the "action" are still available. Click on: www.leatherweekend.com for more information.

The Sun Bears Weekend in San



Mark Legault is Mr. Montreal Leather and advances to compete at IML 2005 in Chicago next May.



The pride of Kansas City, Missouri, is Randy Wrisinger, Mr. Dixie Belle Leather 2005. He advances to compete at IML next May.

Diego promises to be fun with a side trip to Rosarita Beach in Mexico the weekend of January 13-16. For information, email to: boyred69@yahoo.com.

The third annual "Beef Dip" weekend cruise to Puerto Vallarta is scheduled for the weekend of January 23 through 30th. It's a leather & bear collaboration with scores of events in that quaint little city South of Ze Border. For information, surf to www.beefdip.com and tell them David Kloss sent you! To reserve your space, go to www.Leacherbear-tours.com

The last weekend of January (Jan 28-30) is the Mr. Chicago Leather Contest at the Touché Bar. Besides the Meet & Greet on Friday, there's a cocktail party, a tour of the Leather Archives & Museum, a play party at the Bijou Theater and the contest itself. IML 2003 John Pandal repeats as the master of ceremonies. For more info, email to: chicagoledadad@sbglobal.net. The host hotel is Heart 'O' Chicago. Call (773) 271-9181 or visit online at www.hearttochicago.com

The same weekend is Flesh & Fantasy weekend in Dallas plus the Mr. Texas Leather 2005 contest and the So. Central Leather Sir/boy competition. The weekend package is only \$25 and you can get more info at www.dallaseagle.com. The same weekend is the Mr. Padlock Leather contest at the Padlock Bar in Phoenix, but no details were furnished at my deadline.

February

February is a busy month in

the Midwest. It's the Heart of America Leather Weekend (February 4-6) in Kansas City, with most events at the Dixie Belle. They'll be choosing Heart of America Leather Man, Leather Woman, Leather Boy and Leather Girl with Kansas City Leather University on Saturday February 5. For info: www.kcleatheruniversity.com.

The weekend of February 18-20 is the 10th annual Mr. Cell Block Leather Contest at that world-famous bar and the Pantheon of Leather presentation. A mortgage burning celebration at the Leather Archives & Museum will take place on Sunday.

The weekend of February 24-27 is the South Plains Leather Fest in Dallas. Lots of activities in store for you. For info, email to Lhang@aol.com.

March

Early spring will be busy season at the Russian River and in San Diego, St. Louis, Los Angeles and Berlin, and Germany.

From March 4-6, it's the Pacific West Bootblack 2005 competition at Fife's in Guerneville, up at the Russian River. For more info, surf to: www.geocities.com/pacificwestbootblack.com.

That same weekend is the Mr. San Diego Leather contest in that city, and the Mr. Missouri Leather Contest in St. Louis.

Mama Reinhardt's annual Breast Cancer Emergency Fund dinner at the ARC in San Francisco will happen on Saturday, March 12.

The City of the Angels hosts the Mr. Los Angeles Leather 2005 competition and will probably have nine contestants from the feeder contests and the LAL Silver

next page ►

EVENTURES IN LEATHER

Friday, December 17

Exiles host a Leather Swap Meet in the Women's Bldg (18th St. near Valencia). Doors open at 1930, program at 2000 to 2200.

Saturday, December 18

Eagle Tavern "Winter Solstice" party around 2000 featuring "food, drink and live music" by Sub-Arachnoid Space. Hey, it's free!

Wednesday, December 22

Daddy's Bar "Naughty or Nice" Xmas Party tonight from 2000 to 2400. Special entertainment, and Santa's "elves" may stop by!

Weekend, January 14-16, 2005

Mid-Atlantic Leather Weekend in Washington, D.C. by the Centaur MC. Weekend package is only \$109 until Jan. 1st, \$125 after that. Tug Taylor

steps aside for a successor. Go to: www.Leacherbear-Weekend.com.

January 13-16:

Sun Bears Weekend in San Diego includes a side trip to Rosarita Beach, Mr. Bear San Diego, etc. Email to: boyred69@yahoo.com.

Weekend, January 28-30

Mr. Chicago Leather contest at the Touché Bar in the Windy City. Judging: Joey Arteaga, Jason Hendrix, Ron Walters, Thom Dombkowski and emceed by IML 2003 John Pandal. Don't miss this one!

Flesh & Fantasy in Dallas, Texas and the Mr. Texas Leather 2005 Contest and So. Central Leather Sir/boy contest. Weekend pkg. is only \$25. For info: www.dallaseagle.com.

Mr. Padlock Leather contest in Phoenix, Arizona, but no details available at deadline.

POLKSTRASSE

Holiday cocktails

by Sweet Lips

Who remembers the Dalt Club, Gangway and Queen Mary's Pub? The Gangway is still around, of course, now the oldest gay bar in San Francisco! The others are part of our colorful history. Some of us remember the bars well, and also that Great Daddy Joe Roland managed them! Well, I just received a Christmas card and note from Joe, and he is doing well, having changed his occupation. Believe it or not, he has been a brother in a Friary for many years!

Yet another local is moving out of town. The fabulous Dee from Aunt Charlie's Lounge is leaving, and certainly will be missed by all the regulars, and especially by me.

Yes, it is the end, temporarily, of the Club Rendez-Vous, until they find a new space. So if any bars need excellent help, contact

them at (415) 673-7911.

You should see the great Christmas decor at Gingers' Trois! Mason and his staff have gone all out for the holidays, so drop in and be merry! Thanks again, Mason, for hosting my excellent birthday bash!

Steve Suss, owner of the Embers/Avenue in Portland, is having a super 70th Birthday Bash for that mad, wonderful woman of camp, the one and only Mame! Also known as David Hamilton, Mame is the 6th Empress of Portland, and possesses more talent in her little finger than most people have in their whole body. Happy Birthday, honey!

Just had a phone call from Greta Grass, who wants to wish everyone a Happy Holiday! She sounds great on the phone. Love

you, Greta!

That stud Charlie, formerly of the Giraffe and Sutter's Mill, is doing a great job of managing Kimo's. The bar is as lively as ever, with live music upstairs, and a great bar downstairs.

The Cinch Saloon is planning some spectacular events between now and the first of the year.

Their parties are always a blast, so check them out.

If you are out in the Castro (is anyone not out in the Castro?), drop by The Edge and enjoy the lovely clientele and the most handsome bartenders. Treat yourself to a little holiday libation, and tell them Lips sent you.

Of course, you should also drop by The Mix and mingle with the fine crowd there, and meet the popular Marlow, still handsome and young after all these years. ▼

Cocktail Hour

SF Ballet

◀ page 27

then what I wanted to do." The budding young musician went to the Royal College of Music, where he studied with the legendary Norman Del Mar, a conductor and author of a definitive three-volume biography of Richard Strauss.

In 1987, Mogrelia, already a working conductor, studied at Tanglewood with Leonard Bernstein, during "a life-changing summer." He was soon conducting for the London Festival Ballet and traveling widely. "I didn't want to be a music director then. For 10-15 years I enjoyed the travel." His peripatetic lifestyle took him from Australia to Bratislava, where he made a dozen recordings for Naxos.

"About four years ago, though,

I began to want to settle down, to live in one place. Directing a ballet company seemed like a good idea. My agent told me in London in 2001 that San Francisco was looking for a music director. I was conducting at American Ballet Theater when I got an e-mail from Helgi asking if I could conduct at SFB in 2003. My partner, who is Brazilian and had formerly been a chef, was sympathetic to the move. He's now studying interior design at Academy of Art College."

Mogrelia will conduct at least half of the 27 performances of *Nutcracker*. (The two-a-day schedule is too exhausting to do them all.) He's excited about the world premiere production and its musical demands. "The orchestra is great; we're really enjoying the rehearsals. And we have even contracted for the Boy's Chorus to sing live at every performance [in the Snow Scene, usually done on

tape]. We're not using any synthesizers while I'm here," he says fiercely.

Mogrelia's biggest musical passions are contemporary scores — he's thrilled about leading Bernstein's *Dybbuk* next April — and Russian romantics. Oddly, he doesn't care much for British music. "I definitely do not have an affinity for English music, though I have conducted Britten and Elgar. Give me John Adams any day. He has elevated so-called 'minimalism' to a higher kind of music. In fact, I had just been to hear an Adams piece at the Barbican when I got the call from Helgi offering me the San Francisco Ballet job. This is a wonderful company with gifted dancers, and it is a pleasure to be working daily with such interesting people." ▼

www.sfballet.org

The Sea Inside

◀ page 29

convince an audience viewing his charismatic portrayal of Ramon Sampedro (posthumously famous in Spain for a book of romantic poetry and an impassioned account of his struggle to die, *Letters from Hell*) that this man had nothing to live for. "People are expecting to watch a man who's stuck in sorrow, and you will find a bright mind in a kind of peaceful body. He's helped a lot of people to solve their own problems, he has a strong sense of humor, he just has a strong will of dying, because he feels that his life is not dignified

anymore.

"You, as an audience, start to love that person, and wish he wouldn't die; and that's exactly what happened to him. In the name of love, you'll make him live a life he didn't want to live."

Brotherly love

The movie allowed Sampedro's surviving family members to gain perspective on their loss, including an older brother who bitterly fought Sampedro's decision to take his life. "When the brother saw the film, he said, 'Well, I guess I'm the bad guy.' He realized the portrait of him in the movie was an act of love."

Bardem says the love between Sampedro and two women who

popped up late in his life (one, a lawyer, herself disabled, tried to assist his legal struggle; and the other, a housewife, tried desperately to persuade him to go on living) was a special problem for a man deprived of his freedom to move, who feared being overcome by the most out-of-control emotion. "That's why he says, 'Listen, I don't want anybody close to me. I know how painful it is for anybody who loves me, knowing I'm going to die.'"

Bardem says, as someone who tried unsuccessfully to write with Sampedro's breath-controlled computer, the fact the man wrote two books is amazing. "I know I tried, and I could barely write my name." Opens Friday. ▼

Germany 2005 contest during the Easter Leather & Fetish Fair. For more info: www.blf.de.

April

Mid-spring sees the 9th Annual Leather Leadership Conference in Phoenix on the weekend of

April 8-10. Also happening that weekend is Tribal Fire in Oklahoma City. For info: www.tribalfireok.com

That should keep you busy planning, making reservations and getting into the spirit of the Year of the Rooster. ▼

Mister Marcus

◀ previous page

Lake Street Festival on Sunset Blvd. It all happens on Sunday. For info: www.MrLALeather.com.

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Holiday approaches

Seasonal music of all sorts on disc

by Jason Serinus

Christmas with Leontyne Price; Joy to the World, Joan Sutherland; Christmas Festival, Renata Tebaldi (all Decca)

No lover of vocal music can afford to be without these fabled recitals from three of the greatest operatic sopranos of the last 50 years.



The great soprano Leontyne Price joined forces with Herbert von Karajan and the silky Vienna Philharmonic in 1961, when she was approaching her absolute prime. Their fabled Christmas recording for RCA Living Stereo mixes such Christmas classics as "Silent Night" with works by Bach, Schubert and Mozart. The "O Holy Night" is tremendous, the unaccompanied "Sweet Little Jesus" priceless. Price pours out such a radiant stream of sensual highs that one can only dream of curling up in her throat and

purring sweet nothings into eternity.

Coloratura Sutherland, accompanied in her prime year of 1965 by the New Philharmonia Orchestra and queenly husband Richard Bonyng, dazzles beyond belief. Everything is pitched in high keys to show off Joanie's brilliant upper range, with more than a few trills, variations and cadenzas thrown in for good measure. While some selections suffer from Sutherland's pronunciations, La Stupenda lightens for the homey simplicity of "The Twelve Days of Christmas," clearly enjoying Douglas Gamley's arrangement to bits. Judging from the energy she puts out, Dame Joan must have loved recording this album.

Lyrico-spinto Tebaldi, benefiting from the New Philharmonia and Gamley's arrangements, summons the considerable beauty still with her in 1971 to deliver a heart-warming program. Even where she can no longer lighten and float tones higher in the range, her intention and love for the music by Bach, Brahms, Frack, Gounod, Schubert and others make for great singing. Tebaldi's "Silent Night" is an object lesson in how to coax greatness out of a simple melody without resorting to syrupy sentiment.

Holiday Time, Anton Schwarz (antonjazz.com)

Bay Area tenor saxophonist Anton Schwartz joins with a jazz



pianist, bassist, and drummer to perform a short set, five improvisations on classic Christmas melodies. Schwartz and crew occasionally sell out Bay Area jazz club Yoshi's, but this disc doesn't suggest they're ready for an international career. While the feeling is good-natured and the playing more than competent, the improvisations themselves, which begin with fairly straight renditions of the melody line, do not offer sufficient variety or inventiveness to elevate them above the level of easy-listening fare.

Acoustic Christmas, Steve Glotzer (SSR)

Guitarist Steve Glotzer's 25-year history in the music profession has included sharing the stage with many name artists and providing music for the MGM movie *A Guy Thing*, NBC's *Ed, The District*, and *Passions*; Fox's *King of the Hill*; *Martha Stewart Living*; and The Weather Channel. With selective addition of bass, percussion, drums, dobro, tambourine and bells, Glotzer's pro-



ceedings are lively, good-natured and mostly upbeat, if not exactly inspired.

Apollo's Fire, Noels & Carols from the Olde World (Koch)

Jeannette Sorrell's Cleveland-based Baroque Orchestra has assembled a program that mixes traditional European carols with vocal and orchestral works by Biber, Charpentier, Purcell, and Cima. The authentic-instrument performances are marred by close miking and strong conducting that grant such works as the familiar "Il est né le divin enfant" with an aggressiveness more suited for the chant, "Christ is born, Get used to it!"



Peace on Earth, Tingstad & Rumbel (Narada)

This lovely "best of Christmas" album features the mellow musicianship of Eric Tingstad (guitars, synthesizer) and Nancy Rumbel (oboe, English horn, ocarinas, synthesizer, chimes, piano), plus three visits from keyboardist David Lanz. Two tracks are new, the rest taken from previous holiday albums. The original arrangements are simple, sweet, and relaxing in that classic Easy Listening cum New Age way. Your mind may not be taxed nor your spirit elevated, but your heart will be warmed.

A Windham Hill Christmas; The Very Best of Celtic Christmas (Windham Hill)

The perpetual Windham Hill commissions 14 of its most pop-



ular artists to produce just what you'd expect. Highlights are Sean Harkness' "Christmas Time Is Here," the appealing variety of Tracy Silverman's arrangement "O Holy Night," Liz Story's quite interesting "Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas," Steve Erquiaga's winning "Little Drummer Boy," Tim Story's lovely "The Holy and the Ivy," the welcome fun of Philip Aaberg's "The Compleat Nutcracker Sweet," and George Winston surprisingly success in making harmonicas sound like bagpipes. The remaining tracks are mellow and mundane.

Celtic Christmas offers 19 tracks drawn from the six Windham Hill CC volumes that have collectively sold over a million copies. Mostly sticking to tried and true formulas, classical artists James Galway and Benjamin Verdery join a host of folkier musicians to produce a most appealing set.



Messiah Remix (Canteloupe)

The founders of New York's Bang on a Can have commissioned 11 well-known, gifted contemporary artists, some famed for their work in electronic and tape media, to offer original sonic remixes of Handel's *Messiah*. Many of the computerized hits by Tod Machover, Charles Amirkhanian, Phil Kline, Eve Beglarian and others seem routine, even cynical, as though these otherwise venturesome composers could care less about Handel's masterpiece. Laetitia Sonami's "Overture on Ice" is among the most interesting contributions. ▼

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ARTS

Out There

◀ page 26

stripped down to his birthday suit and climbed in."

One member reported that "a men's locker-room attendant accosted a European-accented man who was spotted misbehaving in the steamroom. The man was escorted to the manager and kicked out of the club."

We knew there would be one of them there Europeans involved. Kick 'em out, make 'em leer in English, and they can take their fruity French loofahs with 'em, too.

It's fun to read!

Victory lap

BAR contributor **Matthew Kennedy** scored a hit with his first-ever biography of **Edmund Goulding's** *Dark Victory*, all about the early-20th-century film director who made *Grand Hotel* and *Bette Davis* weepies like the one embedded in the book's title.

Kennedy will be introducing what else, *Dark Victory*, on the big screen at the Bridge Theatre's



Goulding made Bette Davis weep.

glamorous 1939 festival on Monday, Dec. 20. Show starts at 8:30 p.m., 3010 Geary Blvd., and we hear tell Matthew will be signing books in the lobby. bridgetheatre.com

Press releases we never finished reading: "Next time you're ripping open a condom, you may be surprised to find fresh breath protection instead. ;) Jeppers, we hope not! ▼

Opera in books

◀ page 30

Growing from the inferiority complex suffered by Americans in the face of European operatic hegemony, to the post-WWII era when Leontyne Price and William Warfield wowed Paris in *Porgy and Bess*, Villamil's chronicle is based on primary research and extensive interviews. She not only covers singers (the indices are invaluable) but the sociological, ethnic and cultural changes that made it possible for Americans to become equals with foreign artists (North-eastern University Press, \$40).

Now for something about the work — opera does not succeed by voices alone. **Puccini and "The Girl"** (University of Chicago Press, \$35) is an unlikely examination of "The History and Reception of The Girl of the Golden West," by Annie J. Randall and Rosalind Gray Davis. Anybody who loves this opera will go nuts over the details of the genesis and composition of *Fanciulla*, plus a discussion of various interpretations, all set in a biographical and sociological context. Indices, bibliographies and other yummy factual nuggets are included.

Finally, we have two of those speculative cultural histories that will either send you to Nirvana or make you throw the book across the room, depending on your tolerance for academic probing into an artform that is usually centered in the gonads, not the brain. Lawrence Kramer, professor of English and Music at Fordham, launches another of his sophisticated speculations on **Opera and Modern Culture** (University of California Press, \$39.95). Treating opera as a multimedia rather than primarily musical form, Kramer examines Wagner and Strauss in context with "the birth pangs of modern life."

Death-Devoted Heart by British philosopher Roger Scruton (Oxford University Press, \$25) studies "sex and the sacred in Wagner's *Tristan und Isolde*." To Scruton, *Tristan* has a profoundly religious meaning, and he offers some startling suggestions about the nature of erotic love in our culture and the sacred qualities of human passion, ritual sacrifice and redemption. I opened this book one evening and couldn't stop reading until I finished it after Midnight. Musical examples, notes, bibliography and index included. ▼

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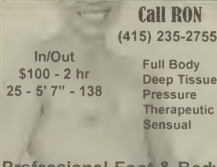
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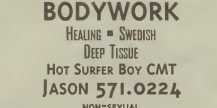
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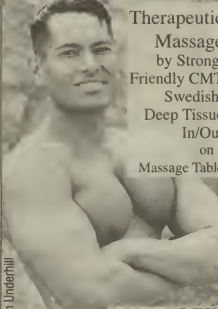
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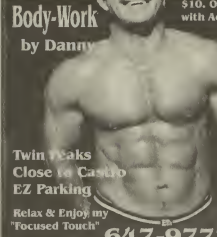
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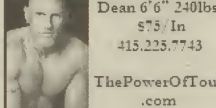
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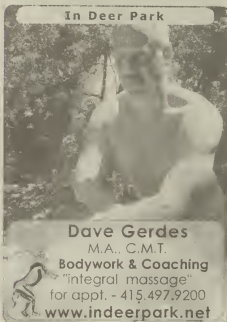
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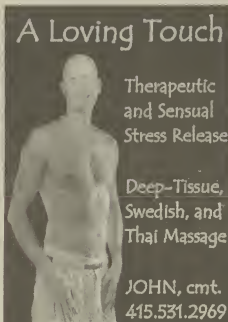
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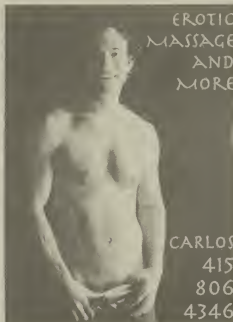


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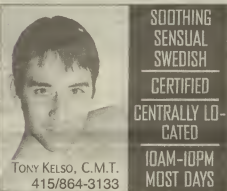
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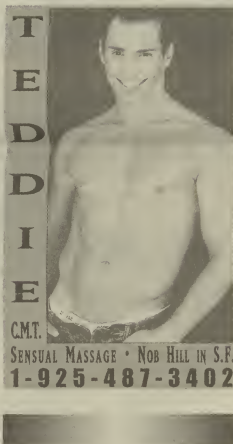
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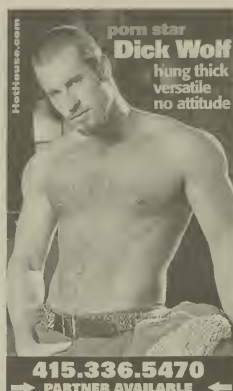
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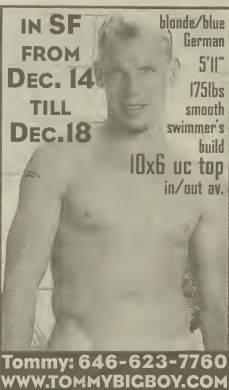
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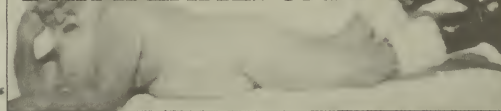
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